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THE HISTORY  
OF THE  
WESLEYAN METHODIST  
MISSIONARY SOCIETY





THE HISTORY  
OF THE  
WESLEYAN METHODIST  
MISSIONARY SOCIETY

BY  
G. G. FINDLAY, D.D.  
AND  
W. W. HOLDSWORTH, M.A., B.D.

IN FIVE VOLUMES

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VOL. I.

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‘Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given, to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which from all ages hath been hid in God, who created all things; to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the Church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.’—ST. PAUL.

‘I look upon all the world as my parish.’—JOHN WESLEY.

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## PREFACE

THE Centenary History of the Wesleyan Missionary Society was projected as an integral part of the celebrations of 1913, and the work of abstracting reports and manuscripts was entrusted to the Rev. W. C. Bourne. A considerable amount of preparatory work was thus accomplished. The work then passed into the hands of the Rev. G. G. Findlay, D.D., at that time the Professor of New Testament Language and Literature in the Headingley College. This appointment at once met with hearty and universal approval. Dr. Findlay brought to the work not only the trained mind and finished style of the scholar, but also a sympathy with foreign missionary work, and a comprehensive outlook upon the whole range of Church activities, such as commanded the reverent admiration of all. His capacity for research, his appreciation of the value of detail, and his grasp of the whole, indicated an ideal historian, and the depth of his personal devotion ensured that the work of recording the sacrifice and service of faith would be worthily accomplished. He gave himself up to the work with whole-hearted enthusiasm, assisted by his talented daughter, who had herself served as a Missionary in India.

The work of examining and collating the manuscript records which contained the earliest history of the Missionary Society was enough to baffle most men, but Dr. Findlay's industry and skill were equal to the task, and his work in this particular alone will remain not the least of many monuments by which he will be remembered. But the thoroughness and completeness of his method became a difficulty, and it soon became apparent that the History would not be ready for publication in the Centenary year. At the same time it was felt—and by none more strongly than by Dr. Findlay—that the Wesleyan Church possessed in these records a wealth of which it was scarcely aware. The story of the spirit in which the Wesleyan Church went forth under the influence of the Evangelical Revival to fulfil her Master's commission, and to 'make disciples of all the nations,' was seen to be one which was far more than a record

of the activities of a Society within the Church. It was part of the religious life of the Church universal, and as such deserved all the labour and pains that could be spent in giving it to the world, while the many examples of heroism and sacrifice it contained were such as to quicken the life of the Church in more materialistic generations. It was therefore decided that an outline History should be brought out as quickly as possible, and that the complete work should be published afterwards. Accordingly Dr. Findlay prepared and published in 1913 the work entitled *Wesley's World Parish*, and continued his labour of completing the larger work upon which he was engaged. But the long and brilliant service of the scholar-saint was drawing to its close. His health declined rapidly, and this caused several interruptions to his work, until on November 2, 1919, he passed to the fuller life of the unfettered spirit. At that time scarcely one-half of the work as Dr. Findlay had conceived it had been accomplished.

The Missionary Society found itself confronted, not only with the loss of the most competent historian in the Church, but also with the fact that the very completeness of Dr. Findlay's work had become an obstacle in the way of its accomplishment. To continue the preparation of the History on the same scale entailed an indefinite prolongation of the time required before its publication could be expected, while the completed work would be of such dimensions as would make it awkward to handle and inaccessible to many. It was therefore decided to modify Dr. Findlay's original scheme to a slight extent, and to issue the work in five volumes. The task of preparing Dr. Findlay's work for the press, and of completing the History, was committed to the writer of this Preface.

The History is that of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, but it must never be forgotten that the missionary service of the Wesleyan Church began as early as 1760, about twenty years after the Wesleys commenced their work of evangelizing their own country—long before that Society was formed in 1813. In 1784 Dr. Coke published his *Plan of the Society for the Establishment of Missions among the Heathens*, a facsimile of which appears in Volume II., and from that time until the formation of the Missionary Society in 1813 great and fruitful work was done under the direction of Dr. Coke in the Western world. The



record of this will be found partly in the present volume and partly in Volume II., and a brief outline of the missionary service of Dr. Coke will appear as an Introduction to the latter volume. The record is such as to make the Church again 'glorify God in' these later Apostles to the Gentiles.

Any one who undertakes the work of describing the missionary service of the Church will find himself confronted with an initial difficulty arising from the fact that such service is necessarily twofold, and its phases are far from being mutually exclusive. Administration at home finds its only interpretation in far distant fields, and the service of the Missionary needs guidance, and the supply of material means, without which his service will lack efficiency. These two phases of a work which is essentially one cannot be described without a certain **measure** of repetition. The policy of those at the Home Base appears again in its application on the field. The reader must therefore be prepared for a considerable amount of overlapping in the record. Far from being 'offended' at this he may even welcome it as revealing the application and practical issue of an idea, or as the co-ordination of actual service to the general life and thought of the Church.

Again, it is impossible to discuss the work of the Church *in vacuo*. It is in a measure the reflection of the spiritual and religious life of the community to which it belongs; it has its place in the general history of the human race. To consider it apart from the development of thought and feeling peculiar to its age would leave it without a most necessary explanation. To separate it from its environment would be bad in art, and fatal to any effort to make it informative. It exhibits tendencies which appear in circumstances not usually associated with Church life, and when it finds itself in antagonism to those tendencies, the story of its conflict has its value for those who seek to understand the meaning of a nation's movement, and to forecast its destiny. This is well illustrated by Dr. Findlay, who shows how the Missionary Controversy of 1889-1890 is clearly related to the reaction against imperial expansion which characterized the second half of the Victorian age. Political movements often closely affect the missionary service of the Church, as may be seen in the account of the founding of the Methodist Church in the United States and in Canada. Social developments obviously affect the Church, whether it finds

itself in sympathy with, or in opposition to, such developments. Of this the agitation of the slave-owners against the earliest Missionaries in the West Indies is a notorious example. The contemporary feeling of other Communion of the Christian Church is reflected in any one section of that Church, and the present History reveals the passing from a sometimes even virulent antagonism into friendliness and co-operation, with a presage of that final unity which will answer the prayers of many hearts. But though the fact of such relations with collateral history as we have indicated necessitates the dealing with material which may seem to some to be external to that which is before us, Dr. Findlay has not hesitated to relate his subject to the general history of the last century.

When, however, allowance has been made for such matters, there will always remain a 'human document' of surpassing interest, and that will be found in the individual Missionary. In such a work as the present it is the emergence of the inspired man which will most readily enthrall the reader. The heavenly vision which commanded his obedience, the character which he brought to his service, the energy which he threw into the working out of his scheme, the human story of mingled defeat and victory—these are the things which command our interest, admiration, and reverence. Sometimes he is foiled by his own impulsive and ill-instructed enthusiasm, or by official failure in sympathy and insight; sometimes he sees 'sloth and heathen folly bring all his work to nought.' Sometimes, again, after long years of patient and faithful service he has the joy of seeing his work brought to a triumphant conclusion. It will not, therefore, be a surprise to find that the names of men whom the Church can never afford to forget are frequent in the pages that follow, and their record will humble, and at the same moment exalt, the Church that claims so great an ancestry. It is here that we read the true romance of missionary service; not, as some used to think, in the personal peril of the Missionary, but in that fascinating love-story which reveals the endeavour to realize a fellowship which is both human and divine. In these pages there will pass before us the human effort to uplift the fallen by laying hold upon the one strength which is sufficient. In and through the human service there may be seen the light that guided uncertain feet, and the Church may find in this imperfect record of the

past the indubitable marks of the presence, the guidance, and the fulfilling power of her Lord.

Some reference must be made here to the sources used in the preparation of this History. Tribute should be paid first to those members of the Mission House staff who some years ago undertook the laborious task of tabulating and arranging the mass of documents, official and other, which had before lacked anything like orderly arrangement. Letters of a century ago have been filed, official records have been chronologically placed, and literary productions have been made easily accessible. Without this preliminary work the labour of the historian would have been increased tenfold, and it is right that this tribute, inadequate as it is, should be paid to a service which otherwise might go unrecognized.

In addition to sources already referred to, mention should be made of the journals which in earliest days Missionaries were instructed to keep. These have often thrown light upon what might otherwise have remained obscure. The *Missionary Notices*, too, afford a wealth of matter which has been extensively used, and their invaluable contribution has been followed by that of more modern magazines, such as the *Foreign Field*. Volumes have been published by Missionaries and other writers which have all been laid under contribution, and it is hoped that the result of such work as is represented by this History may serve to inspire the universal Church with the spirit which lived in those who were 'poured out as a libation upon the sacrifice and service of faith.' 'These all having had witness borne to them through their faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing concerning us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.'

W. W. HOLDSWORTH.

March, 1921.



## OUTLINE OF THE WORK

IN preparing a History of Missionary Work one of two methods may be followed. These are the chronological and the geographical. In the former the growth of the work in all fields during stated periods of time is set forth. In the latter the development of the Christian Church in each several area is attempted, though in dealing with each area the sequence of events, of course, follows in chronological order. The latter method was adopted by Dr. Findlay, and has been followed by his successor. One of its many advantages is that it enables those who may be interested in any particular Mission to follow the history of that Mission without interruption. But it is clear that each Mission depends upon the spiritual devotion of the Church at home. The central organization is there, and so far as the human element is concerned it is there that we must seek the source and spring of the great river which brings life wherever it flows.

Our History therefore begins with an Introduction in which the more modern movement in Christian Missions is briefly described and the missionary character of the Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century is set forth. It is shown that the Wesley family shared in fullest measure the missionary spirit, and that this was prominent both in the ministry of John Wesley and in the great hymns of Charles. THE WESLEYAN COMMUNION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH WAS WHOLLY MISSIONARY FROM ITS INCEPTION.

The whole work is divided into five volumes. The first of these contains an account of the formation of the Methodist Missionary Society and of its developments during the century under review. This is followed by a section describing the beginning of missionary service in North America, a service so fruitful of the best and highest results that both in the United States and in Canada the Churches thus begun were speedily able to claim their independence of the parent Society, and to establish missionary organizations of their own.

The second volume is wholly devoted to the Missions in the



West India Islands. These were found to contain a record of missionary devotion so rich in spiritual interest, and exhibiting principles of missionary service of such universal application, that any slighter treatment was impossible to Dr. Findlay. In the minuteness of his research and the care with which he has recorded the history of the Methodist Church in those islands the reader will not fail to find a great tribute to the missionary spirit of the gifted historian.

Volume III contains the history of missionary service in Australia, Tasmania, New Zealand, and the South Sea Islands.

Volume IV will record the history of our Missions on the West Coast of Africa, and in the South of that Continent, as well as in the Transvaal and Rhodesia. There will also be a section devoted to European Missions.

The fifth volume deals with our Missions in the East, and will be divided into three parts. The first will contain the history of our Missions in Ceylon; the second will be devoted to work in India; and the third will describe our work in China.

Each volume will be closed with an Index.

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FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
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## INTRODUCTION

### MISSIONARY CHARACTER OF THE METHODIST REVIVAL

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THAT Protestantism remained for two centuries and a half asleep to her duty toward the heathen is a melancholy fact in the history of the Church. The internal troubles of the Reformed Churches and the severity of their struggle with Rome are excuses for this apathy in the first instance, but it continued when these hindrances had ceased. The unconcern was the more lamentable as it befell at a time of unprecedented opportunity, at the moment when the horizon of humanity was widened and new continents came within the ken of Christendom. The Church of Rome indeed was not blind to the enlarged prospect. She had inherited from the Middle Ages the missionary obligation and tradition, and in this respect she vindicated her apostolic lineage. The passionate loyalty of the religious Orders, their soldierly spirit, and the utter selflessness attained by their discipline, provided a host of Catholic Missionaries, ready to go to any clime, to endure any hardship, and to lay down life without a murmur at the Church's bidding. At the height of the Protestant uprising, while her strength at home was half broken, the Roman Church found means to overrun with her emissaries the vast regions of farther Asia and America. The great missionary agency of the *Congregatio de Propaganda Fide* was then established,

which rapidly wove its network round the globe. Each discovery made by sea or land in that age of restless exploration was studied and turned to account ; the Cross was planted, and the rights of the Papal See asserted on the new-won soil, with the least possible delay. Rome marched forward with the world's advancing boundaries. By the Papal Bull of May 4, 1493, she assigned, with magnificent arrogance, to Portugal the unknown shores lying eastwards, to Spain those lying westwards, of a certain Atlantic meridian. The ships of those countries bore Dominican and Franciscan friars, and afterwards Jesuit monks, along with their traders and soldiers to convert the heathen ; and this work, which too often indeed was effected by unworthy means and produced fruit of dubious Christian quality, was prosecuted with astonishing energy. Fresh realms yielded homage to Peter's Chair ; the prestige of the Papacy, shaken in Europe, was restored throughout the world, and the Roman Church redeemed her proud title of ' Catholic.' But alas, by this extension of the papal sway wide regions of the earth were pre-occupied against a purer faith. The ' other Gospel ' gained a calamitous advantage, and was by two centuries first in the field of modern missionary conquest.

In the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Protestant maritime powers won the mastery of the seas and nullified the Pope's donation to Spain and Portugal. The sense of Christian responsibility was, however, defective in the new empire-builders, and their foreign domination was acquired and exercised in its early stages with scanty regard either for religion or humanity. England, it must be confessed, proved the greatest sinner in this respect, as she was the most vigorous and aggressive in naval enterprise. Along the African coast the man-stealer, not the missionary, was the representative for generations of British interest in the native. The slave-trade between Africa and America was secured to England by the Treaty of Utrecht (in 1713), and formed a chief prize of the victories of Marlborough ! It is computed that, up to the abolition of that accursed traffic in the year 1807, three and a half million Negro slaves were transported to America under the British flag. Great family fortunes were built on this foundation. In Hindustan till the year 1813 the East India Company, with the sanction of Parliament, forbade the Church

to fulfil her Lord's command, while its agents committed flagrant acts of spoliation. These facts sufficiently evidence the paralysis that disabled English Christianity for missionary action upon heathendom until near the close of the eighteenth century ; a general indifference to the salvation of non-Christian races pervaded Protestant Europe. The results of this infidelity have been lamentable and enduring. Rapine and cruelty for long prevailed in the dealings of modern Christians with uncivilized nations. Their commerce brought ruin instead of benefit, and the name of Christ has come to be 'blasphemed among the Gentiles' through the fraud and greed of those who bore it. The peoples of the Protestant Communion have heavy arrears to make up and atonement to render for the neglect and bitter wrongs of the past.

Errors of practice have their root in defects of faith. Not the means only, but the mind and will to evangelize the heathen were to seek in the leaders of the Reformation, heroes of faith and lights of the world though they have been. They applied, more or less deliberately, to nations as well as to men the Augustinian doctrine of election. Puritan New Englanders, provoked by savage resistance, stigmatized the dispossessed Red Indians as 'Canaanites,' and justified by Scripture their ruthless extermination. Partly in ignorance, and partly in defiance of the facts, Protestant divines asserted that the apostles had already carried the Gospel to all the various lands of the earth—even to America and the Far East ! Else how could it be said, 'Their sound went out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world' (Rom. x. 18) ? The nations now Muhammadan or pagan, they inclined to think, were such as had, under one dispensation or another, rejected the light of revealed truth and sinned away their day of grace. 'The holy things of God,' said the Lutheran doctor, Ursinus of Ratisbon, in his reply to Weltz, 'are not to be cast before such dogs and swine.' The apostolic mandate was addressed, as they argued, to the apostolic age, when it had been duly fulfilled ; and the promises of the New Testament concerning 'the Gentiles' belong to those nations which received and held fast the Gospel, and are now found within the Christian pale. It was the business, indeed, of the civil governor in every country to maintain Christian ordinances and to see that the truth is preached to all under his authority ; but the



duty of the members of the Church, and of Gospel Ministers in Christian countries, is to serve their own folk in the place where God has set them ; ' them that are without God will judge.' Add to this that Martin Luther expected the end of the Gospel dispensation by the year 1558. His outlook for Christendom was bounded by the conflict between the evangelical Zion and the papal Babylon, of which he was the champion. Zwingli and Calvin, from their different standpoints, suffered from the like narrowing of the world-scope of the Gospel. Their contracted views assumed a severer form in the teaching of the scholastic dogmatists of Germany and Holland in the seventeenth century, who with an air of pious orthodoxy, and in strict adherence to the letter of Scripture, closed the door of God's kingdom upon the bulk of mankind. No wonder that the blight of Rationalism fell in the next age upon a Christianity so cold of heart and careless toward the weaker races of mankind ; upon Churches by whose neglect these were left the prey of the ruffian adventurer and the slave-hunter. The conscience that forbids a Christian people to commit against its neighbours wrongs, such as were the slave-trade with Africa and the opium-traffic more recently forced upon China, bids it at the same time give to them its Divine treasure in the Gospel of Christ ; the same inhumanity that withheld this great boon inflicted on weaker peoples these terrible injuries.

Here and there voices of remonstrance were raised against this heartlessness, and attempts were made in furtherance of the wider Gospel. Erasmus, at the beginning of the Reformation period, and the Dutch Saravia, who died as Dean of Westminster in 1613, urged in vain the claims of the outlying heathen. Justinian von Weltz, in the latter half of the seventeenth century, made a noble appeal to the Lutheran Church to carry out God's saving will ' that all men should come to the knowledge of the truth.' His testimony bore fruit in after-days, but brought for himself at the time the charges of self-conceit and blasphemy.<sup>1</sup>

The Dutch Government, it is true, from the beginning furnished its East Indian settlements with chaplains. Amongst these were devoted men, who sought the conversion of the

<sup>1</sup> See the account of this notable man in Warneck's *History of Protestant Missions*, pp. 31-39. Baron von Weltz was born at Chemnitz in 1624, and died as a solitary Missionary in Dutch Guiana somewhere about 1670.

heathen and baptized large numbers of converts ; but the conversion was effected in too external and mechanical a fashion, so that the fruit of these early Missions largely disappeared when governmental pressure was removed. The English Parliament, at the prompting of Oliver Cromwell, who in so many respects was beyond his age, adopted, with the vote of a money-grant, an extensive plan for missionary work abroad ; but this was set aside at the Restoration. King Christian IV of Denmark, 1705, has the honour of sending out the first Protestant Missionaries to India. The Germans Ziegenbalg and Plütschau began under his auspices, in Tranquebar, a work of grace that has continued with rich fruit to this day. A hundred years later the Danish authorities sheltered Carey and his companions in their factory at Serampore, when they were expelled from British territory for preaching Christ to Hindus. The conversion of the Laplanders and Greenlanders was also sought by the Scandinavian Churches ; but their work, like that of earlier Lutheran Missions, was too much a matter of Government policy to bear great spiritual fruit.

In Germany the Pietistic movement of the early eighteenth century first excited concern for the salvation of the heathen. This sentiment, awakened mainly by the writings of A. H. Francke and the work of his seminary in Halle, took effect, characteristically, in the training of Missionaries before any definite field of labour was in view. Halle supplied the Danes with the missionary pioneers already named. From the same school some years later came Schwartz, who counts as the father of Tamil Christianity ; and it furnished the earliest, and some of the most faithful and efficient, labourers engaged by the (English) Church Missionary Society after its formation in 1799. The establishment of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (S.P.C.K.) and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (S.P.G.), which took place in 1698 and 1701 respectively, augured the coming of a brighter day for the English Church. The first of these two Anglican Societies took over, and sustained till 1824, the work of the Danish Halle Mission in South India. The latter Society (which sent John Wesley to Georgia in 1735) was concerned chiefly with the spiritual welfare of the British Colonies and Dependencies, and spent its strength in providing chaplains for Government service. It maintained a languishing existence,

with funds fluctuating between £2,000 and £5,000, until the missionary revival was well advanced in the nineteenth century.

Meanwhile the small and impoverished community of the Moravian Brethren had set an example to all Christendom. This Society demonstrated, for the first time since the days of early Christianity, how the salvation of mankind should be made a vital interest of the Church and the dominant purpose of its entire membership. 'In two decades (from 1732 onwards) the little Church of the Brethren called more Missions into life than did the whole of Protestantism in two centuries' (Warneck). To-day the *Brudergemeinde* shows a better right than any other Christian body existing, in virtue of the proportion which its activity in Foreign Missions bears to its strength, to call itself a 'missionary Church.' Methodism stands, through John Wesley, in almost a filial relation to Moravianism. We owe to it a considerable part of what we most value in *him*—the missionary impulse along with the rest.<sup>1</sup>

Other local movements took place, and individual efforts were made, often in a truly martyr spirit, toward the conversion of the heathen during 'the times of' the Protestant 'ignorance.' The Quakers who founded Pennsylvania were distinguished by their humane and equitable dealings with the American Indians and their concern to give them true religion. John Eliot of New England won the title of 'Apostle of the Indians' by his devoted and successful labours for the Red Man, carried on in the middle of the seventeenth century, the fruit of which was unhappily destroyed by subsequent wars, and David Brainerd (sent out by a small Scottish Society about 1740) accomplished in a few years a wonderful work amongst the Indians of Delaware, leaving a profound impression behind him and an inspiring memory.

These sporadic and ill-sustained attempts threw into stronger relief the disregard for the condition of the heathen world which characterized Protestant Christendom in general during the period between the Reformation and the Evangelical Revival. The Churches of the Reformation had received anew God's message of salvation in Christ, addressed to all the world; they had appropriated the message, but declined to

<sup>1</sup> See *Moravian Missions*, by A. C. Thompson, New York (1882).



forward it. This disregard was the more culpable in the case of our own country, because of its wide maritime connexions and unrivalled sea-power, and in view of the manifold ways in which its representatives exploited the natives of other lands for commercial and political gain. Intercourse thus carried on between stronger and weaker peoples, directed to mercenary ends and with no spiritual motive to inspire or restrain it, is essentially *inhuman*; it debases both parties, and breeds demoralization and destruction.

The religious awakening which marked the middle of the eighteenth century in England, and the rise of Pietism and Moravianism in Germany, while they breathed a new energy into the whole Protestant movement, at the same time gave it a new direction. In this revived strength the Churches of the Reformation overleaped their national limits, and the Gospel of Jesus and of Paul resumed its world-mission.

The Evangelical Revival bears on its front the name of *The Wesleys*. In the traditions of this family the missionary light had continued to burn through the darkest times. John Wesley (or Westley), the grandfather, who was amongst the 2,000 ejected clergy of 1662, had earnestly sought before this time to go in missionary service to Surinam, in the Dutch East Indies, but he was prevented by family circumstances. Samuel Wesley, in the next generation, formed a large scheme of the same kind, which he laid before the Archbishop of York, urging that the British East India Company should be induced to facilitate the spread of Christianity. This object, he wrote, 'would be well worth dying for.' The path was blocked against him in turn. Susannah Wesley, in the Epworth Rectory, fell in with the story of the Danish missionaries, Ziegenbalg and Plütschau, and their work in Tranquebar. 'For several days,' she said, 'I could think or speak of little else.' The impression this narrative made upon her led Mrs. Wesley to give a weekly missionary instruction to her children, to the benefit of which John Wesley refers gratefully in his Oxford years.

The latter went to Georgia, under the appointment of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, with the intention of giving his life to evangelize the heathen Indians. His mother heartily approved this destination of her scholar-son.

'Had I twenty sons,' the noble woman said, 'I should rejoice that they were all so employed, though I should never see them more.' The authority of General Oglethorpe, Governor of the Colony, which was then in its infant days, and the duties of his chaplaincy to the settlers, who proved a troublesome charge, held Wesley back from the desire of his heart, and he returned to England with the discovery that he had still to learn the Gospel he would fain have carried to the heathen. But John Wesley had thus attained to the world-outlook; he had gained insight into colonial and foreign missionary problems; he had come face to face with living heathenism on its own soil, and felt its pitiful appeal. His whole subsequent thinking and teaching were coloured, and the trend of his work for his own country influenced, by the two years of early manhood (1736-38) spent on the edge of the pagan world. Charles Wesley shared for a shorter time in his brother's Georgian experience, with the like benefit.

In the Society of the People called Methodists, formed by John and Charles Wesley, the evangelical movement of the eighteenth century found its most genuine and fruitful expression. The whole ethos and drift of this movement made for world-evangelism. The world-missionary impulse proceeding from the Revival, of which the personal antecedents of the Wesleys gave a significant indication, seized on the Methodist people with peculiar force; their organization and modes of fellowship supplied an instrument for its communication. Amongst the larger Protestant Churches the Methodist Communion is that which alone, from the outset and distinctly, adopted a world-wide aim. It addressed the message of Christ to the individual man as on the way to reach through him mankind. Our Church, so long as she remembers herself, can say with the Apostle Paul: 'It pleased God to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles.' The hymn that stands first in the Methodist Hymn-book, and is sung with the greatest ardour by John Wesley's people, culminates in the lines:

Look unto Him, ye nations, own  
Your God, ye fallen race.  
Look, and be saved by faith alone,  
Be justified by grace.



In point of doctrine, the Wesleyan Revival was a reaction against narrowing conceptions of the Gospel and the Church of Christ, whether Calvinistic, sacerdotal, nationalist, or particularist of whatever kind. 'Universal Redemption' was the watchword of the Methodist Preacher. The logic of Free Grace admitted of no limits to its application within the human family. When the barriers raised by the 'decrees of reprobation' were once swept down, the word of the Gospel had free course. Like the winds and the sunshine, it went forth to 'the whole creation under heaven!' The man who received God's mercy in the terms of the Methodist proclamation must first acknowledge the rights of his fellows to its benefits before he could realize his own; his personal interest in the redemption of Christ was a deduction from the universal interest of mankind therein.

Who did for every sinner die  
Hath surely died for me!

How could one so believing, with rational consistency or with common gratitude, be indifferent to Foreign Missions? To assume such an attitude, to repudiate his Negro or Hindu neighbour as a fellow-claimant on the estate secured for mankind in Christ, and to refuse the help by which that claim might be made good, would be to renounce the very ground on which his own assurance of salvation rests.

The revolt from Calvinism which inspired many of Charles Wesley's hymns had in the first instance impressed upon his lines respecting 'general grace,' and 'undistinguishing regard,' and 'universal love' of the Divine Father, a theological rather than an inter-racial meaning, but such language took another aspect in the crisis of that age, when through world-commerce and the clash of arms the singers were confronted with men of foreign climes and colours. A people that loved to cry, 'O that the world might taste and see the riches of His grace!' that sounded the invitation:

Come, O my guilty brethren, come,  
Groaning beneath your load of sin!  
Christ's bleeding heart will make you room;  
His open side will take you in!

—such a Church must have been dishonoured had it refused, when the opportunity was given, to send its Gospel to the

heathen. When John Wesley said, 'I look upon all the world as my parish,' he was defying the veto of the parish priest ; but he was at the same time confessing himself, like St. Paul, 'a debtor to every man' ; he was admitting the duty to preach the Gospel, so far as in him lay, the world through. Under these convictions the men of the Evangelical Revival became 'teachers of the nations in faith and truth.' The world-expansion of Protestantism commenced from this date.

The first and only local 'parish' of which John Wesley had charge was the parish of Savannah, in Georgia, to which he went out seeking to make proof of his ministry amongst the heathen. When, half a century later, he ordained Coke and his companions for America, he sacrificed reluctantly his Church prejudices to his missionary instincts ; the necessity was laid upon him to give Christian ordinances and pastoral care to Christ's sheep in the western wilds, who looked to him for guidance. He discerned an overruling providence in the storm that drove Dr. Coke, sailing as his representative, to the West Indies, and gladly furthered the foreign undertakings in which Methodism was thus involved. Preaching thirty years before this (at Wandsworth) in the house of Nathaniel Gilbert of Antigua, who became the father of Methodism in the Western Isles, when 'two Negro servants and a Mulatto appeared to be much awakened,' Wesley wrote in his *Journal*, 'Shall not God's saving health be made known unto all nations?' This was a deep presentiment ; the seed of the Kingdom, scattered by the hands of this great sower, has been borne by the winds and currents to every shore. For the seed of the Gospel-word was sown by Wesley and his preachers with the faith that 'the field' for its growth is 'the world.' According to their faith God has wrought for these witnesses of His world-embracing love, and servants of His 'will that all men should be saved.'

Along with the doctrine of Universal Redemption, that of Entire Sanctification formed a vital tenet of the Wesleyan teaching. The ideal of 'perfect love' to God and man inspired the songs of Charles Wesley ; it animated the preaching and moulded the character of his greater brother. The grace of God revealed in the Gospel, as the Methodist Preachers proclaimed it, was infinite alike in the range of its mission and the measure of its efficacy. It offered a full salvation for all men,

from all sin ! The Wesleyan interpretation discovered in ' the word of the Cross ' a depth that matches its breadth ; and it dared not set bounds to the possibilities of spiritual renewal and enablement for the individual man that the Gospel contains, any more than to the extent of its designs for the salvation of mankind. In one verse our fathers sang of God's ' sovereign grace ' :

Throughout the world its breadth is known,  
Wide as infinity ;  
So wide, it never passed by one,  
Or it had passed by me !

and in the next :

The depth of all-redeeming love,  
What angel tongue can tell ?  
O may I to the utmost prove  
The gift unspeakable !

In the second stage of the advance of Methodism, from the year 1760 onwards, this aspect of the evangelical faith became prominent, and the pursuit of holiness engrossed the minds of Preachers and people throughout the Societies. This internal work of the Holy Spirit had much to do with the forming of the missionary mind in early Methodism. Under its influence men sought to know God's ' whole counsel ' ; they were ready to ' serve the present age ' with a consecration that put all the practical powers of life and its cherished possessions at Christ's disposal. This is the order of things in the economy of grace—saintship and service, inward dedication and outward activity ; the sanctifying of heart and will imports the yielding of hands and tongue, talents and goods, an entire and living sacrifice. ' Sanctify them in the truth,' prayed Jesus, adding then the words, ' As thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I sent them into the world.' The Christian sanctification never terminates with the sanctified man ; it is consecration to a mission—to the world-mission of the Redeemer Himself ; it is the soul's invitation to ' the fellowship of God's Son.' The passion for holiness which breathes in Charles Wesley's hymns ' For Believers seeking Full Redemption,' and which signalized the middle period of John Wesley's ministry in Methodism, was the prelude to the outburst of

missionary enthusiasm in the next generation. To this thorough-going and widely realized consecration must be ascribed the extraordinary sum of lay service, unremunerated except by the smile of God and the love of the brethren, which was given to the Church at home by the first Methodists. It was the same eagerness of hearts overflowing with love to God and to all mankind that actuated the missionary ventures and sacrifices of a century ago. Fit volunteers were rarely wanting, when the call came, to face the most distant exile or dangerous climate or savage form of heathen life ; and the means to send them were forthcoming, though in the straitened times when the Missionary Society was founded our poorer people had in many instances to tax themselves to the bone for its support. The love of Christ made their burdens light. The experience of full redemption in Him, and the belief that this glorious salvation was designed and possible for the whole human family, generated the propagandist zeal of primitive Methodism. By virtue of its origin, and in the glow and rapture of its earliest love, the Methodist Society became a missionary Church.

The organization of our Church—due to the administrative genius of its founder acting under the pressure of circumstances—prepared it in a peculiar degree for foreign propagation. The sense of corporate life in the Spirit and joint responsibility to Christ was carried into all its working, and gave vital sensibility to the whole. Its ministry was a preaching fraternity, bound together by spiritual intimacy and mutual oversight, and exercising its pastoral functions, not through sacramental prerogative, but by virtue of its effective ministration of the Gospel. Its lay fellowship was pervasive and real, being constituted by a common enjoyment of the saving grace of God that prompted a frank and grateful testimony. Through the bonds of mutual edification the humblest member of the body of Christ shared in the life of the whole, and ‘every joint’ supplied its part in the maintenance and growth of the spiritual fabric. A spiritual organism of this nature was fitted to subsist in any climate, and was able to adapt itself to the most various social conditions. Wherever the commonwealth of souls in Christ was called into existence, Methodism could thrive.

A Church thus constituted had no place in its system for the



competitive distinction of 'home' and 'foreign' interests, since the Saviour it existed to proclaim had 'by God's grace tasted death for every man.' In the brotherhood He gathers round Him 'there is no Jew and Greek, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman, but all are one man in Christ Jesus,' and 'the same Lord is rich in mercy to all that call upon Him.' Born of the Spirit of Christ at this fullness of the times—in an epoch of revolution, of world-change and adventure for the human spirit—British Methodism could not remain insular and nationally straitened. It was 'thrust forth' into God's world-harvest by an inward compulsion, while it was summoned by the clear call of God, expressed in many instances through the appeals of its own children dispersed in many lands. The establishment of the Missionary Society in the year 1813 gave formal signature and incorporation to the missionary work which Methodists of their own accord had already carried forward successfully for fifty years.



# I

## BEGINNINGS OF THE SOCIETY

Transition from Personal to Connexional Management—Stimulus from the L.M.S.—Missionary Eagerness of the People—Broadening the Basis of Appeal—Initiative of Leeds Laymen—Action of Rev. George Morley—Favourable Conjunction in the Leeds District—Sympathy of Halifax—Misgivings in some Quarters—Missionary Meetings a Hazardous Experiment—Of Questionable Legality—Divided Opinion of London Committee—Cautious Circular from Headquarters—Founding the Methodist Platform—Benjamin Wilson's Parlour—Three Inaugural Sermons—Watson's Address—Bunting's Defence of Leeds Proceedings—Anxiety of Speakers at First Meeting—Occupants of the Platform—Gist of the Resolutions—Speech of William Dawson—The Missionary Essence of Methodism—Climax of the Meeting—Financial Results—Virtual Creation of the Missionary Society—Jabez Bunting the Prime Organizer—Other Districts follow Suit—Conference of 1814 ratifies the Formation of the Society.

DR. COKE had been assisted in his superintendency of the Missions, since the Conference of 1804, by a 'Committee of Finance and Advice,' consisting of the London Preachers, which by degrees succeeded in centralizing and regularizing his widely scattered operations. The work was passing out of the stage of personal adventure into that of organized Church direction. Yearly collections were made, by order of Conference, in the chapels of Circuits which Coke had not visited; full reports were printed, with balance-sheets—first appearing biennially, then annually—from the year 1804 onwards. As yet there were no public meetings, no local committees or collectors, no domestic agency for sustaining the Foreign Missions, beyond the London Committee above referred to, but every year increasingly they became the anxiety of the Conference and the care of Methodism at large. Their conspicuous success, especially in the West Indies, had secured the confidence of the people; and the ceaseless activities and winning appeals of Dr. Coke had raised up friends and advocates for them in every part of the kingdom. Sailing for the East at the end of 1813, the father of Methodist Missions felt that he could

now safely trust their maintenance and future direction to his brethren. He set his face to India with a lightened heart, assured that other shoulders were prepared to carry the burden he had borne almost singly for so long, and that, if he should never more return to England, God would provide for the far-off Churches he had planted and nourished. Coke's letters in the months before his departure manifest the conviction that his presence could now be dispensed with at home. He had already mooted the formation of the local Auxiliary Societies, which took their rise in the autumn of 1813 and quickly grew into 'The Missionary Society' of Methodism.

Another cause, concurrent with the removal of Dr. Coke, stimulated missionary organization at this juncture. The London Missionary Society had been founded in 1794 on an unsectarian basis, and had adopted an undenominational name; its leaders aimed at combining all evangelical interests in its favour. Its original Anglican supporters, for the most part, drew off from this combination after the establishment of the Church Missionary Society in 1799, but the L.M.S. rapidly developed provincial branches and spread its activities through the country. In various directions Methodists began to be interested in its enterprises and pledged to it their help.

This state of things provoked a 'godly jealousy' in our leaders, especially in view of the difference of doctrine that sharply divided the followers of John Wesley from other Non-conformists, amongst whom Calvinism was at that time generally prevalent. Dr. Coke writes to his Missionary Committee from North Shields, under date October, 1812:

The L.M.S. are forming committees of two or three of our friends, to raise annual subscriptions among our Societies and hearers for the support of *their* Missions.

He goes on to say that unless we adopted similar means, and utilized the generosity of our own people, we should be 'throwing thousands into their lap! When we are so pressed with debt, and if we are to employ hundreds or thousands of pounds in Asia, shall we employ them in establishing Calvinism in that immense country instead of Methodism?' 'I am certain,' he continues, 'that our competent people (and they can only be applied to for annual subscriptions) will subscribe annually

for CALVINISTIC Missions, if they do not subscribe for ours.'<sup>1</sup> A 'West Riding Missionary Society' was inaugurated in Leeds in the summer of 1813, under Congregational auspices, as a branch of the London Society, and its boughs were 'running over the wall.' Coke was in that town and neighbourhood soliciting subscriptions about this very time. From several indications it is manifest that the methods of the London Missionary Society, and the degree to which it was enlisting Methodist support, excited his attention and that of the leading Wesleyans in the district, and influenced their action both in the way of encouragement and apprehension.

The fact was that the people were eager for missionary action; the forward impulse came, in the first instance, from them. Had the Conference discouraged the movement because of domestic difficulties, and had the Leeds Ministers and lay captains failed to advance at the right moment, the rank and file would have taken up the march. If no Methodist channel had been opened for the rising tide, it must have found another outlet; the London Society, in Leeds and elsewhere, would have preoccupied public favour and engaged in its support the irrepressible liberality of Methodism. The attempt to confine the regard of the laity to their own country, and to the embarrassed condition of the home exchequer, would have been wholly and deservedly futile. The fear of impoverishing the Connexion, which almost led the Conference of 1813 to veto Coke's expedition and forbid the extension of its foreign work to the East, proved to be quite mistaken. When certain Class-leaders of the Leeds District insisted that no member of the Society should contribute to the Missions who had not paid his quota to the Circuit account, quite a number of poor people came forward to subscribe their class-moneys for the first time, so that they might have the privilege of helping in the conversion of the heathen! Bunting testifies a little later that all the Methodist funds in the Circuits concerned had felt the stimulus of the larger vision of world-need.

The missionary business [he writes] has taught the poorer and middling classes the dignity and privilege of giving; and the principle once learnt, the exercise of it is not confined to the particular occasion which first called it forth.

<sup>1</sup> The italics and capitals are Coke's.

Dr. Coke had addressed his solicitations mostly to people of wealth and standing. No appeal had yet been made to the multitude. The first experiment by way of public meeting and systematic canvass was now to be attempted, and in this the London Missionary Society had shown the way. It is difficult to say who should be credited with the original suggestion of the Leeds demonstration. George Morley 'travelled' in the Leeds Circuit from 1812 to 1814 and was Superintendent in the latter year, with Jabez Bunting (then Chairman of the District, though the *second* Preacher and but fifteen years old in the ministry) and Robert Pilter, who shared the enthusiasm of the other two, for his colleagues. Mr. Morley took the directing and responsible part in all the proceedings. Dr. Bunting in after years was accustomed to speak of him as 'the father of the Missionary Society.' But Bunting's was unmistakably the organizing hand; it was to him that Dr. Coke wrote on the eve of departure his exuberant letter of thanks for the service done. A letter that passed some thirty years ago between Mr. J. Brigg (a family name fragrant in Leeds Methodism for four generations) and the Rev. Benjamin Hellier, the much-beloved Governor of Headingley College, takes us to the fountain-head :

I remember [wrote Mr. Brigg] Dr. Coke being at our house one day. [Coke was on a begging round in Leeds in the spring or early summer of 1813.] My father had been accompanying him to collect donations, when during dinner my father suggested to him the wisdom of forming a Society of laymen to raise the funds, and thus to relieve him of the arduous task of personal effort. . . . Dr. Coke repeated to Mr. Scarth and Mr. Morley the proposal made to him, and they took it up and carried it into practical effect, whilst my father was laid aside, and died on July 25, 1813.

William Gilyard Scarth was an active and popular Local Preacher; at the same time a prosperous man at business, a borough alderman, and a force to be reckoned with in the politics of the town. The Coke-Brigg incident, followed by the death of Mr. Brigg, appears to have wrought on the mind of Mr. Scarth, for the latter, being the guest of Mr. William Dawson on the occasion of his preaching at Barwick-in-Elmet, declared with emphasis :

The missionary cause must be taken out of the doctor's [Coke's] hand; it must be made a public, a common cause.



Mr. Dawson's assent was speedily assured. Soon afterwards Messrs. Scarth and Turkington (also of Leeds), when visiting the Liverpool Conference on their business as Circuit Stewards, opened their minds on the subject to George Marsden—a recent Leeds Minister, and subsequent Missionary Secretary and twice President of the Conference—urging that 'something should be done in a more public manner for the missionary interest belonging to their own body.' Mr. Marsden 'perfectly agreed with their views.' What such men as Brigg and Scarth and Dawson were saying, all Leeds Methodism was thinking. At this period a delightful unity prevailed throughout its ranks; no breeze had yet arisen of the storms by which this garden of the Lord was laid waste in later times. When Morley and Bunting therefore took the matter in hand in September, they found the occasion ripe so far as Leeds people were concerned, and their appeal met with a prompt and full response. In truth the initiative in the way of generous purpose and the sense of public duty, and the first definite conception of an organized local Missionary Auxiliary, belong to the Leeds laity rather than to the ministry.

The speech of George Morley, made at the meeting of October 6, shows how the subject had unfolded in his mind, and indicates the extreme embarrassment of the Connexion, out of which his courageous action led the way.

When at the last Conference the subject of Missions was brought forward and proposals were made for extending them to the East, though all joined in the common wish for extending Christianity to those countries, many were discouraged, and some absolutely terrified, from making the attempt at this time, on account of the exhausted state of the funds. But it was at last agreed to diminish the number of the Preachers at home, in order that we might be enabled by our frugal savings to maintain a greater number of Missionaries in foreign countries. That was an anxious, painful, and important hour. It was then that I resolved on returning to my circuit to propose some extraordinary effort for the continuance on their present scale of our important Missions, and for their yet farther extension. On my mentioning the subject to the brethren, my colleagues in the ministry, though they felt the difficulties in our way, they were hearty in the cause and willing to give it all their aid. I spoke of it also to some respectable<sup>1</sup> individuals in Leeds and in the Circuits around, and not an objection was raised, but all were willing to assist.

<sup>1</sup> It is curious how this adjective has depreciated in the course of a century. At that time, and in the literature and public style of the eighteenth century, this was the commonest term used to describe men of superior character and station.



Like a wise Superintendent, Mr. Morley had felt the pulse of the Circuit, and knew that his laymen were devising liberal things when he put himself at their head in this eventful movement. His colleagues, Bunting and Pilter, were new to Leeds ; but the latter had come from the neighbouring Bramley and could vouch for its readiness, while Mr. Bunting had just removed from Halifax, where he presided over the District bordering on Leeds, and he knew well the temper of the West Riding.

There happened to be at this time a conjunction of talent amongst the Preachers of the adjacent Circuits peculiarly favourable to Mr. Morley's design. At Bramley were posted William Naylor, the youthful Superintendent Minister, who lived to give his benediction to the Society at its Jubilee in 1863, and James Everett, Bunting's antagonist of a later day ; at Wakefield James Buckley, who became the first General Missionary Secretary, with Richard Watson, then in his thirty-third year, and recently restored to the Wesleyan ministry. The venerable James Wood was in charge of the ' Academy ' for the Preachers' sons, opened the year before at Woodhouse Grove, seven miles away. Bramley had quite recently been detached from the Leeds Circuit, and throbbed with the same missionary ardour ; its support was at once secured. The Wakefield Preachers and laymen proved equally willing to co-operate. But it was not till the actual morning of the meeting, when leading Methodists from other Circuits urged an extension of the plan, that it was resolved to make the association a ' Missionary Society for the Leeds District ' instead of for Leeds by itself. This action set the example for other parts of the Connexion.

The Halifax District (not Halifax and Bradford) supplied in its Chairman, James Wood, above named, the mover of the first resolution at Leeds, while three of its prominent Ministers—Charles Atmore of Halifax, Richard Reece of Bradford, and Thomas Jackson of Sowerby Bridge, ' famous in the congregation, men of renown '—took a similar part in the proceedings. Thomas Thompson of Hull, who was one of the two Methodist Members of Parliament of that date, entered warmly into the Leeds scheme, and occupied by invitation the chair of the Leeds meeting.

From some other quarters qualified support was forthcoming.

The Pontefract Superintendent regretfully excuses himself from attendance, because of the peculiar quality of his Circuit. This reproach has long since passed away. The Sheffield Chairman is benevolent, but critical; he regards the plan as a very good one 'to counteract the influence of the Dissenters and of the Church'—certainly not the highest motive for missionary enterprise—and remarks in a postscript to his letter:

You will excuse me saying, I think in your advertisement you seem to adopt too much the plan and phraseology of our Calvinistic brethren, which I must add I am not partial to.

However, Sheffield was not likely to lag far behind Leeds, and it came into line a few months later.

The planning of a missionary meeting is nowadays the most ordinary thing in a Methodist Preacher's round of work. A hundred years ago it was a perilous innovation! The Methodist chapels were built for 'Preaching-houses,' as Wesley regularly called them; this was the first 'public meeting' advertised as to be held in the chapel for any object beyond that of Divine worship and the ministry of God's word. No such gathering would be allowed, even to-day, in an Anglican church, and the precedent was regarded by many strict people as likely to open the door to desecration of the house of God. Promiscuous popular assemblies for religious purposes could not easily be controlled; they might become occasions of debate and uproar, and might even assume, it was feared, a political complexion. The Conference had given no sanction to this step, and men of law and order were inclined to regard the action of the Leeds authorities as *ultra vires*. Samuel Bradburn, then Chairman of the Manchester District and the most popular of the older Preachers, in the first report of it, stigmatized the Leeds movement as 'Killhamite.'<sup>1</sup> In the *Life of Dr. Bunting*,<sup>2</sup> by his eminent son, the late Thomas Percival Bunting, the situation is thus described:

It would be difficult to reply satisfactorily to the question as to what constitutional right was possessed by some eight or ten Preachers,

<sup>1</sup> Alexander Kilham, a young Preacher of conspicuous ability and devotion, adopted democratic views of Church Government at variance with those prevailing amongst his brethren. He headed the first secession in the Wesleyan Conference, becoming in 1797 the founder of 'The Methodist New Connexion,' now merged in 'The United Methodist Church.'

<sup>2</sup> Vol. II., p. 46. To this biography, which is a classic of Methodism, any writer dealing with Methodist affairs during this period must be greatly indebted.

in one corner of the Connexion, to commence a movement like this. Only one<sup>1</sup> Ex-President graces the list [of speakers]. Morley and Buckley had but just gained their Methodist majority; and my father, a man of fourteen years' standing, was the senior of all the rest. Watson was unknown. The project would have excited surprise if confined to a Circuit; as aiming at organizing a District, it was an innovation portentous for good or evil. . . . The Conference and Coke having left everything to chance, the crisis was in the last degree alarming; no other modes of meeting the difficulty were so much as proposed.

That the policy of Morley and Bunting had grave risks, and was in fact only justified by its success, is intimated in the reminiscences of William Naylor. In the Preface to this published discourse he writes, glorying in his youthful audacity :

We very soon heard that our proceedings were received with unfavourable feelings by some of our brethren. If not our motives, the propriety and legality of our act was questioned; and it must be acknowledged that we had no authority from the Conference to sustain us. Soon our example was followed by the Halifax, York, Sheffield, Cornwall, and Newcastle Districts. Long before the Conference we heard that we were to be called to account for unconstitutional conduct, but having £10,000 to present to that tribunal—I do not say that it perverted their judgement or blinded their eyes, but it sealed the lips of those who were to be our accusers.

Had Mr. Morley waited for the sanction of Conference the golden moment would have passed; he was compelled to act on the instant, and to look for approval afterwards.

On the first conception of the plan Bunting wrote to Robert Smith, then Secretary of the Missionary Committee in London, to report and ask advice. Smith replied privately (under date September, 1813):

It is impossible for me to tell you the strong sensations that some of us felt when we read, in the last *Evangelical Magazine*, that the Dissenters had recently preached and made collections in one of our chapels in Leeds for their Missions<sup>2</sup>, at a time when our own missionary affairs are so awfully embarrassed. I am sure the Missionary Committee will be exceedingly delighted when they know of your plan for

<sup>1</sup> This is a mistake; both James Wood and Charles Atmore by this date had 'passed' the chair.

<sup>2</sup> Again it appears how greatly the 'zeal' of the Nonconformists 'provoked' Methodism to foreign missionary action. The L.M.S. was spoken of as 'the Missionary Society.' Richard Watson refers to this expression in a tone of complaint in writing to Jabez Bunting from Hull three years later; and some Methodists, it is reported, contributed to it supposing that the collectors represented their own Society!



assisting our own missionary cause. The same mode was proposed and agreed upon at our last District Meeting (in London), and commended to the Conference, but I believe this, like so many other minutes of our District, was never attended to by the Conference.

This was Smith's personal attitude ; the official reply, signed by Coke and Smith and in the handwriting of the former, intimated that the Metropolitan Committee was *not* unanimously 'delighted' at the forwardness of Leeds. A 'very great majority'—11 to 2, as it afterwards transpired—'agreed that something ought to be done in a general way for the support of our own Missions, and to prevent the money which our friends are willing to subscribe for missionary matters being turned into another channel (!) ; but as all the brethren were not fully prepared to decide finally on this important subject . . . they leave you to your own judgement in respect to the plan you judge best to adopt.' Coke's hand must surely have faltered when he penned this chilling message ; it was poor backing for a brave endeavour. A subsequent London circular, dated October 11, limits its instructions to the recommendation 'that the state of the Missions and of the funds should be laid before every congregation,' and 'that periodical subscriptions should be requested to be received by persons chosen by the Preachers, and paid through the Superintendent to the General Treasurer.' The scrupulous official mind was not prepared for the idea of missionary meetings and local auxiliary organization ; nor would it 'rush in' where Conference 'had feared to tread !' So London lost the initiative in the formation of the Society, which passed to the provinces.

However, no veto was imposed, and, in spite of this douche of cold water, Morley and Bunting, in counsel with the Leeds and Bramley laymen, persevered with their well-laid plans and achieved a triumph which rebuked timidity and silenced criticism. 'The West of Yorkshire was deluged with advertisements' of the intended meeting. Mr. Bunting 'wrote to almost every friend he had in the neighbourhood entreating attendance and aid, and the adoption of a similar course in their respective Circuits.' 'It was in the idea of a *meeting*,' then so novel and hazardous in the eyes of pious folk, 'that the secret of success' lay, as T. P. Bunting writes<sup>1</sup> :

<sup>1</sup> Bunting's *Life* of his father, Vol. II., p. 45.

My father had the sagacity to foresee, what experience has amply proved, that in order to sustain united and systematic action, especially among the Methodists, the platform, as well as the pulpit and the press, must be put to their utmost use.

The meeting of October 6, 1813, in the Leeds Old Chapel, was in fact the setting up, for all popular purposes, of *the Methodist platform*, which was created by Foreign Missions and is sacred to their service before every other object.

A 'Provisional Committee,' to hatch out the scheme, was formed, consisting of the Ministers concerned, with certain of the most interested laymen. In this conjunction there was the nucleus of modern Methodist administration. The body so formed held its first meeting, according to local tradition, in the drawing-room of Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Wilson, whose house still stands in the Town Street of Bramley. The faith of this ancient Methodist couple burns brightly to-day in their descendants.

At Armley, half-way between Bramley and Leeds, in the Wesley Chapel (then recently opened), a preparatory sermon was preached on Tuesday, October 5, by James Buckley<sup>1</sup> of Wakefield, from the prophecy concerning Jehovah's message, 'It shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it' (Isa. lv. 11). A six-o'clock prayer-meeting on the Wednesday morning commenced the proceedings of this day of holy convocation. Richard Watson, in the forenoon, delivered the first of his great missionary sermons in the Albion Street Chapel,<sup>2</sup> from the text, 'Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live' (Ezek. xxxvii. 9). Richard Reece preached the evening sermon, after the protracted public meeting, from the words of Ps. lxxiv. 20, 'Have respect unto the covenant; for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.' Methodists were insatiable sermon-hearers in those days! It is remarkable that all three texts were taken from the Old Testament, and were in the prophetic

<sup>1</sup> The Jubilee Report (1863) inadvertently credits this sermon (published in the *Methodist Magazine*) to Samuel Bradburn. Bradburn, at that time stationed in Liverpool, took no part in the Leeds inauguration. In fact the Chairman, Thomas Thompson, was the only person outside the West Riding who appeared on the platform. No member of the London Committee, not even the President of the Conference nor Dr. Coke, appears to have been invited. Leeds relied on its own resources, and the undertaking had a strictly local origin and complexion. Bradburn, at this date, was somewhat critical and suspicious in his attitude to the movement (see p. 42).

<sup>2</sup> The Albion Street Chapel was the second of importance erected by the Methodists in Leeds, being displaced some years later by the Oxford Place Chapel.



vein ; they admirably set forth the character of the missionary movement, in the Divine purpose behind it, which assures its success ; in the mysterious and supernatural power by which that purpose is accomplished ; and in the moral transformation it is destined to effect, based as it is upon the ground of God's everlasting covenant with our race.

Along with the names, the residences of the speakers were printed in the advertisements, at ' Mr. Thompson's earnest and repeated advice,' who ' observed that this would give weight and influence to our proceedings.' The whole machinery of public religious assemblies, now so familiar, was then in creation ; and the gathering in ' The Boggard House,'<sup>1</sup> with its Chairman, its string of resolutions, ' moved, seconded, and supported,' and its concluding votes of thanks, was to set the fashion and provide the model for innumerable Methodist meetings, since held all over the world.

Nineteen Resolutions were proposed and supported in thirty-nine speeches—some of them brief and formal enough, others having but slender connexion with the terms of the proposition in the speaker's hands. But the Resolutions themselves were as far as possible from being conventional or otiose. They unfolded a mature and thoroughly thought-out plan, and were recognized and taken up in turn as so many steps in the resolved march of Methodism in the Leeds District along the path of organized and sustained missionary effort.

Mr. Naylor's recollections betray the anxiety—almost trepidation—felt by the actors in stepping on to the platform :

As the time drew near we gathered in the vestry, and the mass of the people assembled in the chapel was appalling to behold.

(The old chapel of those days might contain twelve hundred people—the men below, women occupying the galleries). The Resolutions were distributed, but no one moved to go into the chapel, while one after another was saying, ' I know not what to say. I never was at a meeting of the kind.' Dr. Bunting, in his impressive manner, remarked, ' And I know not what to say, but I am willing to be a fool for Christ's sake ! ' Our

<sup>1</sup> This inaugural meeting was held in ' The Boggard House,' on the site of which St. Peter's Chapel was erected. The roof of ' The Boggard House ' covered for many years the Richmond Hill Chapel in Leeds.

brave forefathers, it appears, had their moments of fearfulness, and this was one of them. 'So terrible was the sight' of a Methodist crowd gathered for a missionary meeting—so formidable and pregnant with unknown consequences is any signal innovation in the movements of religious bodies—that even Jabez Bunting seems to have said, 'I exceedingly fear and quake!'

Beside those already noted, there figured amongst the ministerial speakers the keen and versatile James Everett, then in the flush of his youth, who thirty-six years later achieved a far different fame as a leader of the greatest agitation that ever shook the frame of Methodism; Thomas Vasey of Halifax, Richard Waddy of Holmfirth, and William Warrener of Selby, the first Methodist Preacher sent to the West Indies and the one returned Missionary on the platform. He was Coke's companion on his earliest voyage across the Atlantic. Dickenson, Hargreave (of Wortley), Jackson (of Headingley), Martin, Myers, Musgrave, Ripley, Sigston, Stocks, Wood (of Wakefield), are surnames that stand out amongst the lay spokesmen of that great field-day, beside those of Dawson and Scarth. Samuel Hague was the first elected Treasurer. In the list of the general Committee for Missionary Affairs, which included, with the twenty-six Ministers of the District, the Stewards of Wakefield, Dewsbury, and Selby—the Circuits which up to this date had joined Leeds and Bramley in the scheme (Birstall, Otley, Pateley Bridge, Pontefract, and Wetherby came in later)—there were more than thirty other laymen of light and leading chosen from the same area. Amongst these the names of William Heaton, Michael T. Sadler, the Parliamentary champion of the factory operatives, Thomas Pawson (of Farnley), Samuel Rinder, John Wild (of Armley), and Benjamin Wilson (of Bramley), arrest the eye and recall, along with others previously enumerated, forms and faces venerable to the childhood of the oldest living Methodists of the District. In some instances their descendants are serving to-day in the Church of their forefathers.

It might be tedious to recite in full the nineteen Resolutions, but they are important as exhibiting the Missionary Society at its embryonic stage, and as indications of the future trend of our Church organization. Drawn up by the master hand of Bunting, these are no pious platitudes, no sentimental

declarations of conviction and sympathy, but practical in the highest degree ; they are constructive and constitutive in their import. The first ' most heartily approves of the Missions ' as established ; the second goes on to say :

That on account of the increased and increasing extent, importance, success, and expenditure of the said Missions, it appears to this meeting highly expedient to form a Society in this District, for the express purpose of augmenting the fund by which these benevolent undertakings are supported.

*Ipso facto*, it appears, the Society is created, for Resolution 3 determines ' that the said Society shall be denominated THE METHODIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY FOR THE LEEDS DISTRICT.' In the fourth place

All subscribers, whether their subscriptions be paid weekly, monthly, quarterly, or annually, and also all benefactors of five guineas and upwards, shall be deemed members of this Society.

The net is spread wide, and subscription is to be made as elastic in its terms as possible. Fifthly, two General Meetings of the District are to be held in each year, in and out of Leeds, the former to ' be considered as the Society's Annual Meeting ' ; and all arrangements for the Meetings are to be made by the General Committee. Resolution 6 determines the constitution of the General Committee, which we have described above, giving its members ' power to add to their number, if they deem it expedient ' ; fixes quarterly dates for the Committee's meeting ; specifies the *quorum* of attendance, and the proportion of the Committee annually to be changed ; and empowers the Annual Meeting of Subscribers to ' appoint ' the General Committee. In the seventh place, ' the Preachers and other friends of Methodist Missions ' are ' respectfully recommended ' to promote ' the immediate formation in every town and village of their respective Circuits ' of Local Committees for the object in view. The idea of ' Village Committees ' has not yet been realized ; it stands over for consideration in the Centenary movement. Resolution 8 defines the constituency of the Local Committee, which is to include ' the Society Stewards,' along with the Preachers of the Circuit and any resident members of the General Committee, ' and such other persons as they shall think proper to associate with themselves.' (One does not



understand why the Circuit Quarterly Meeting is ignored at this point of the scheme.) Resolution 9 invites to Committee Meetings (General and Local) all donors of ten guineas and upwards, and annual subscribers of not less than one guinea. Resolutions 10 and 11 are occupied with Regulations for Collectors and Treasurers, who are to be associated with the Local Committees, the Collectors paying over monthly the moneys they have collected to the Local Sub-Treasurers, and the latter remitting quarterly to the General Treasurer of the District, while the District Treasurer is to remit to the Treasurer of the Missionary Fund in London 'appointed by the Methodist Conference immediately after each Annual Meeting, or oftener, if the General Committee shall so determine. Resolution 12 requests the London Committee to give the Society of the Leeds District, and to each Circuit in it, a distinct place in its Annual Report, entering all annual subscriptions of not less than half a guinea as separate items, with the subscribers' names attached. Resolutions 13 and 14 nominate the District Treasurer and four Secretaries—the Revs. Jabez Bunting and Richard Watson (later colleagues at the Mission House), associated with Messrs. W. G. Scarth and J. Sigston. Resolution 15 names and appoints the General Committee for the year ensuing; and with this proposal the whole machinery of the new organization is set a-going. Resolution 16 instructs Mr. Watson, whose forenoon sermon had made a profound impression, and with whose extraordinary talent Bunting was already well acquainted, to prepare an Address appealing to 'the friends of Methodist Missions, and to the Christian public in general,' on their behalf; the said Address, together with the Resolutions of the present meeting, is to be printed and circulated, under the direction of the General Committee. A further request was made to Mr. Watson, by Resolution 18, to publish the sermon he had preached in the Albion Street Chapel. The report, on its publication, was enlarged to nearly fifty pages by an extended reproduction of the principal speeches delivered at the meeting. Along with Watson's sermon, it had a wide and rapid circulation—a copy of the third edition, dated 1813, is lying before us—and communicated the Leeds impulse, in its method as well as its object, to the whole of Methodism.

In reading the above report, one is particularly struck with

the information, ability, and spiritual power of the principal lay speakers—Thompson, Scarth, Wood, and Dawson. Under the holy eloquence of the last-named the emotion of the assembly reached its highest pitch, and William Dawson revealed himself as a prince amongst platform orators and missionary pleaders. He sets out to establish two propositions :

(1) That a missionary ministry is under the peculiar approbation of God, as the grand means of enlightening the world.

(2) That, of all people, Methodists should be the first to encourage missionary efforts.

In proof of the former assertion, he pointed to 'the great missionary, God manifest in the flesh,' and His mission to our world ; next to 'the ministry and success of the Apostles' ; further, and very frankly, to the Roman Catholics, amongst whom he finds, notwithstanding the most lamentable errors, 'a missionary ministry owned of God.' He sees the same principle involved in the teaching of the Protestant reformers, despite the limitation of their field of action, and brought into play on the largest scale by 'a fresh effusion of the missionary spirit' upon the instruments of the Evangelical Revival. Dawson marks a chief effect of that Revival, and a main factor of its extension, in the 'sweeping down of the middle wall of partition between the clergy and laity.'

It is now [he says] considered an incontrovertible maxim in religion that he who experimentally understands Christianity has a right to teach it.

And he points to the powerful influence of lay testimony in the religious life of the day.

Dawson's second affirmation—that a missionary duty to the world devolves, above all others, on the Methodist people. went to the heart of the business of the day and carried the hearers with it in the full tide of enthusiastic assent. For his position the orator found two related grounds—'the doctrines which we believe, and the privileges which we enjoy.' In arguing this he showed that the Methodist ministry everywhere is a missionary ministry, and challenged his audience to say whether this agency has not been blessed of God to their salvation, and whether it does not make them debtors on its account to every man.



Stand [he says] in the centre of Great Britain, and ask concerning our Ministers, 'Have they laboured, or do they labour, in vain?' Thousands upon thousands would immediately answer, 'No!' Fly over to the West Indies and ask, 'Have they laboured, or do they labour, in vain?' and fifteen thousand voices answer, 'No!' Stand upon the vast continent of America and ask once more, 'Have they laboured, or do they labour, in vain?' Upwards of two hundred thousand voices answer, 'No!' But let us concentrate our views and inquiries. I now look round on this congregation, and though we are in the presence of so many of our dear fathers and brethren in the ministry, I ask you, Have they laboured, or do they labour, in vain?

(Here hundreds of voices interrupted the speaker, and spontaneously spared him the trouble of repeating his negation, by emphatically answering, 'No!') Mr. Dawson continued:

I thank you, my friends. Then, sir, may I not be permitted to ask, Shall we monopolize the benefits of such a ministry? By the instrumentality of these men we have received our spiritual eyesight; and have we received it for no other purpose than to see our poor fellow creatures going blindfolded to ruin? . . . Under such a ministry we enjoy 'feasts of fat things, of wines on the lees well refined'; and shall we see our heathen brethren famishing with hunger and not send them one dish of the dainties of the Gospel? It cannot be! . . . We have a number of young men truly converted and deeply devoted to God, who would gladly imitate the angel in the Revelation and fly through the earth to 'preach the everlasting Gospel to every nation and kindred and tongue and people.' But they *want wings*! And shall we deny them pinions, when it is within our power to furnish them with such useful appendages? Certainly not! To-day we are met to devise the measures best adapted for attaining this important object, and I trust we shall not meet in vain. If we possess any proper sympathy with our fellow creatures, if we feel any powerful sense of our superior obligations to God, we shall neither be the last nor the least in missionary efforts.

These are the sort of 'words' that 'are half-battles,' and such was the thrilling eloquence, and the bright and soaring imagination, which made William Dawson the greatest lay Preacher ever given by God to Methodism, the equal and companion of the masters of our Israel in his day. Full well did the Leeds laity vindicate, both by word and deed, the conspicuous place assigned to them on the platform of the first missionary meeting and in the constitution of the first District Auxiliary. One is astonished to find that no collection was made at any of the inaugural sermons or the meeting, but *the collectors* were

quickly set to work, and when the second meeting for the District was held in the following February, it appeared that a sum of over £1,000 had been contributed in this short interval.

The address, drawn up by Watson in compliance with a resolution of the afternoon meeting and circulated along with the published report of the latter, states the three main reasons determining the action now taken :

(1) The opening of Hindustan and neighbouring countries to the preaching of the Gospel.

(2) The excellent example of other Christian societies, viz. the Baptist, the London, and the Church Missionary Societies. [Here the address claims that the plan these associations adopted of gathering funds by small periodical contributions from people of limited means was borrowed from the Methodists] ; and

(3) The loss of the personal exertions of Dr. Coke, who for years has stooped to the very drudgery of charity . . . whilst he leads our little band of Missionaries against the idolatry of the East, and whilst more than one hundred Methodist Missionaries in different parts of the world are immediately engaged in the same contest with the powers of darkness.

The address concludes :

It devolves upon us who remain at home to give effect to the necessary financial arrangements and to furnish the sinews of this holy war.

The above statement defines clearly the crisis which had arisen ; it showed the necessity of giving to Methodist Missions abroad a wider scope, and a surer basis at home in the instructed sympathy and contributory support of the people, if the Church meant to obey the calls of God expressed by the recent turn of events and through the awakening of the missionary spirit in British Christianity.

In his letters to the London Committee, both before and after the meeting, Bunting apologizes for the elaborate nature of his arrangements.

I have felt some reluctance [he writes] both as to the formality of a Society, and as to the plan of weekly subscriptions. But I see that in these parts we have no alternative. We must give some *eclat* and publicity to our measures, or we can do nothing effectual ; and if we refuse the weekly help of the lower classes, who cannot become annual subscribers, the Dissenters will gladly accept it, and are sure to profit by our scruples.

In a subsequent letter (of October 11) he further defends his action :

If you think we have adopted a plan too formal and heavy, I must remind you that when we appear before the public, the public expects the usual formalities ; and, as they are not sinful, they may be useful.

It is easy to see why misgivings were awakened about these proceedings in conservative minds, and why Samuel Bradburn, Ex-President and Chairman of the Manchester District (then including Liverpool) and a Minister whose tongue was the most powerful in Conference, wrote of the Leeds doings as 'little less than Kilhamism!' For, in the first place, an initiative had been taken affecting the whole Methodist economy, by a District acting for itself and with no direction or sanction from the Conference. Further, the new missionary Plan set up Committees, general and local—intended to embrace every village of the Circuits—with a profusion of laymen sitting on them. This mode of administration, it was said, might by an easy contagion be extended to all Methodist affairs. 'Lay Representation' was as yet in the far future, and the government of our Church affairs devolved solely on the Preachers sitting in Conference and District Meeting. The entire system of the new Society took its authority from a public meeting. The resolutions that called it into being were submitted to this tribunal, and passed into effect one by one under its vote. Men shook their heads at the bold young Chairman of the Leeds District, and asked each other whereunto this sort of thing would grow. Bradburn, curiously enough, swung in his judgement from one extreme to the opposite ; after denouncing in his first letter on the subject the Leeds measure *in toto*, on second thoughts he suggests the advisability of forming similar local committees 'to have an eye to our schools and to all our other concerns, as well as to our Missions!' The cautious and constitutional Edmund Grindrod, in reporting these opinions from Manchester, and after stating that 'some of the brethren disapprove of the plan altogether, and anticipate alarming consequences from the establishment of lay committees, who, they say, may by degrees take the Missions out of our hands, and even control all our affairs,' continues in writing to Bunting :

I cannot, for my part, see any evil in the institution of lay committees, whose only object is to raise money for the Missions, and whose only authority is to remit the same, when raised, to the General Committee of Preachers in London.

He thinks, however, that it is pushing matters too far to talk of 'appointing sub-committees in villages, &c.,' and that there is a danger of diverting in this way the sources of the ordinary Circuit income. In his reply Bunting declares that delay on our part would give 'a mighty advantage to the Dissenters,' who will intercept for their Society the stream of Methodist liberality, so bent are the people on missionary undertakings; and that the Leeds effort for Missions, so far from checking, has stimulated the Methodist folk, both rich and poor, in their readiness to support the ministry at home. The whole burden of collecting for the Missions had been undertaken by the laymen, in consequence of their being drawn so fully into counsel, and their views and projects being so readily entertained, in all that was done for the foreign work in Leeds.

Halifax followed the example of Leeds in November. Then Hull spoke for the East Riding of Yorkshire, and Sheffield ranged itself with the companion Districts of the West Riding. York took its turn in March. A few weeks later Newcastle-on-Tyne joined the chorus. Cornwall, at the other extremity of the kingdom, formed its District Missionary Society before the Connexional year was ended. Bunting and Watson were in request, where available, for pulpit and platform on all these occasions. The plans of Leeds were adopted; the resolutions and the order of the meetings and the rules of the local Societies were framed upon its lines. Walter Griffith, who was then stationed at Rochester, President of the Conference for that year and an intimate friend of Bunting, writes to the latter to give his blessing:

I wish you good success [he says] in your missionary work, and regret that the plan was not followed in London . . . There are difficulties in that place which do not exist in the North.

When the following Conference, meeting at Bristol, records its 'thanks to those of the Preachers' in the above Districts 'who have been concerned in the formation of Methodist Missionary Societies, and to all the members and friends of the said Societies, for the very liberal and zealous support which they have afforded to us in this important department of the work of God,' and when, further, it 'strongly recommends the



immediate establishment of a *Methodist Missionary Society* in every District,' the new departure has been completely vindicated. The Missionary Society is legitimated as the true child of the Methodist Church, henceforth to be the object of her most solicitous care.



## II

### THE FRAMING OF THE SOCIETY

Relation of Missionary Societies to Parent Churches—Where 'Society' is a Misnomer—Foreign Missions not an Adjunct to the Church—They are 'the Charge of the Entire Church'—Disadvantages of this View—Analogies in British Colonial Designations—Dr. Coke's 'Plan of the Society' in 1784—The Council for Management of West Indian Affairs, 1790—Legislation of 1800—The Committee of 1804—Finance and the Laity—Relation of Auxiliary and Branch Societies to the Committee—'Laws and Regulations of the General Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society'—District Sub-Committees—Circuit Committees—Central Sub-Committees.

THE British Missionary Societies which took their rise at the beginning of the nineteenth century, while due to a common impulse and bearing the same general complexion, differed much in their internal constitution and in their relationship to the parent Churches. They fell into two classes, according as they stand, or do not stand, in organic connexion with a given Church. The British and Foreign Bible Society affords a perfect example of the second class of such institutions. Its members are enlisted by pecuniary subscription and voluntary aid to the Society; its management is independent of ecclesiastical control or patronage; it forms in every sense, legally and practically, a distinct and separate corporation. Called into existence for the one purpose of disseminating the Holy Scriptures, the Bible Society unites in contribution to this grand object men of very various confessions. It claims to be superior to sectarian differences—at least to those existing amongst Protestant Christians—and combines for its support all lovers of the Bible, supplying a platform on which they are able to meet and act in common.

The position of the Missionary Societies is less simple. Their object is not merely to publish and distribute the Bible, but to interpret it, to expound its message and apply its teaching to heathen peoples, establishing among them Christian

communities, whose existence presupposes an explicit creed and a settled order and basis of fellowship. They seek to propagate the faith and the Church of Jesus Christ. This aim implies, obviously, a definite *doctrine* and definite *discipline*—the matters on which the differences of the Churches turn. The foreign missionary work of modern Christendom has inevitably, therefore, assumed a denominational and diversified character, which is expressed in such titles as 'The Baptist,' or 'The Church,' or 'The Wesleyan Methodist' Missionary Society.

The Baptist Missionary Society (founded in 1792) bears the denominational imprint on its front, and it has faithfully reproduced in other lands the Baptist type of Church life and Christian excellence. The Baptist communities being, however, purely congregational, their missionary work is of necessity an extra-ecclesiastical corporation, in which local churches take part as and in whatever way they think fit. The London Missionary Society, established in 1794 under the title of 'The Missionary Society' (see page 37), attempted at first an interdenominational rôle. Its promoters, including Anglicans along with Independents, hoped to effect an alliance of English evangelical forces (excepting the Baptists, previously on the field) in the work of Missions to the heathen. The attempt awakened much enthusiasm, and for a short time promised success. But the combination was impracticable. Anglicans soon found that their Church principles would not admit of such missionary co-operation, and the Church Missionary Society was instituted in 1799, with Episcopal order for a main plank of its platform. The Methodists also for other reasons were shy of the union; they shrank from the Calvinistic theology which was dominant amongst its supporters. Moreover, they were, under Dr. Coke's leadership, already committed to large missionary undertakings on their own account. Hence the London Missionary Society soon became, practically, a Congregational institution, though still describing itself as an 'interdenominational' Society. It is related to Congregationalism in England and Wales very much as the Baptist Missionary Society to the Baptist confession.

The two Anglican missionary bodies—viz. the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, established in

1701, whose work amongst the heathen became considerable during the last century, and the Church Missionary Society already mentioned—though belonging to a communion which lays peculiar stress on organization and Church authority, resemble the Dissenting Societies we have described in their non-official and ecclesiastically irresponsible character. From the standpoint of Church law these two powerful agencies are nothing more than private associations of earnest clergy and laity for missionary purposes. While their ordained Missionaries are in Anglican orders, and the Anglican diocesan system is reproduced on their foreign fields, the Societies themselves render no account to Bishops or Convocation; they are neither controlled by the Church nor co-ordinated with each other,<sup>1</sup> but represent in fact the two historic parties into which the Anglican Communion is divided.<sup>2</sup> The system of the Church of England is essentially national and insular, and its condition in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries precluded its authorities from taking action in the way of promoting Foreign Missions, had they desired to do so. The vast extension of that noble Church through and beyond the British Empire, which is its glory at the present time, is due to private Christian enterprise, to the operation of Societies of a voluntary, unofficial nature, and largely under lay direction, which lie outside the Church's jurisdiction and have no place in her constitution 'as by law established.'

The Foreign Missionary Organization of the Presbyterian Churches (in Scotland, Ireland, and England), and that of Methodism in its several branches, rest upon other principles. In these cases the Missionary 'Committee,' 'Society,' or 'Board' forms a department of the Church itself. Accepting the missionary obligation on behalf of the Body of Christ collectively, the governing Assembly (or Conference) proceeded, in Christ's name, to call out Missionaries and collect funds from

<sup>1</sup> Of recent years a Central Board of Missions has been formed by Convocation with a view to correlate the two Anglican Foreign Missionary Societies, to survey the field of their joint operations, and to supply an organ of communication between these bodies and the heads of the Church at home. Diocesan Boards of Missions have also been instituted to discharge similar functions on a smaller scale, but these boards are purely advisory.

<sup>2</sup> A State Church moves with difficulty beyond conventional limits. The action of the National Church of Scotland, whose General Assembly in 1824 called into existence its 'Committee of Foreign Missions,' speaks for the comparative freedom and the right of initiative in spiritual matters, which 'the kirk' has always boasted.



its people, committing the direction of the work to officers of its appointment. By such action the extension of the kingdom of God throughout the world was recognized as the proper business of the Church and a vital purpose of its existence, to be kept in view by the servants of Christ in all their communion with each other, no less than the care of souls and the Christianization of home and country. Under the sense of missionary vocation the territorial idea of the Church in Methodism and Presbyterianism has reverted to the ecumenical. The Christian Society is understood to rest on nothing so limited as a parochial, or diocesan, or national basis, for it is grounded on God's plan for the redemption of mankind. Where this is understood, missionary service will be realized as a duty inherent in Christianity, as a debt owing on Christ's account to the race of which He is the Head and for whose salvation He gave His life. The consciousness of this end of its being, when awakened in the chief assemblies of the Church, comes to pervade its membership. Conveyed from the centre to each local *ecclesia*, it animates the entire frame to its extremities. On the Methodist theory, Foreign Missions form a main and indispensable function of the Church, alike in its largest and in its most limited capacity; every fibre and every faculty of the Body of Christ lies under contribution for their furtherance.

When a Church collective has in this way adopted Foreign Missions and made their pursuit its intimate care, the designation 'Society' is something of a misnomer for its missionary organization. The Presbyterians of the North are surely more correct in speaking of their Foreign Mission Department as 'The Church of Scotland Foreign Missionary Committee'; 'The U.F. Church of Scotland Foreign Mission Committee'; or the Methodist Episcopal of America, who have their 'Board of Foreign Missions.' These Churches have adapted the titles of their missionary agencies to the facts. Our own Church, in principle and action, though not in name, stands on the same footing in missionary matters. The W.M.M.S. is no self-constituted and self-regulated 'Society,' in the sense in which this description applies to the B.M.S. or L.M.S., or to the C.M.S. or S.P.G. within the Church of England. The word 'Society' has historical significance for us in this connexion, as it reminds us that our missionary organization in its inception



followed the usage of the time, and belongs to the group of Societies formed a hundred years ago, and as it recalls the fact that it took shape originally in local Auxiliaries which acted on their own impulse, without waiting for Conference authorization or permission. The title is formally justified by the provision that all contributors of a certain sum of money are accounted by its rules and regulations members of 'the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society,' and enjoy certain privileges in this capacity.' On the other hand, it is the case that from the outset the Methodist Conference, as the supreme assembly of the Church, has stationed the Missionaries and appointed the executive by which their operations are directed and the funds for their maintenance are raised and administered, and that the whole work is subject to Connexional rule and management. This dependence is fundamental for our system, and is inherent in the nature of the Methodist Church. The W.M.M.S. is no 'Society' distinct from the 'Society of the People called Methodists,' but to all intents and purposes that same Society in its missionary character ; it is simply Methodism organized for missionary service. When the several Districts of the Connexion, on Dr. Coke's departure for Ceylon, came to the aid of the Missions which he had planted, and when in 1818 the Conference instituted a 'General Missionary Society' to embrace and consolidate the District Auxiliaries, what then took place was not that a Missionary Society was formed amongst Methodists, but that the Methodist Society realized its wider calling, and expressly and unitedly undertook its missionary duty to the world. This being so, in strict consistency we Methodists should no more speak of the 'Foreign Missionary Society' than we do of the 'Home Missionary Society' or the 'Sunday School Society.' Foreign Missions are no adjunct or outlying appendage to the Church ; they form, equally with Home Missions or with the spiritual care of our children, a part of its structure—an interest incumbent on every Methodist in so far as he is a loyal subject of the Kingdom of Christ.

It is worth while to dwell upon the above distinction, for it penetrates deeply into the nature and working of the Church. If our analysis be correct, the two kinds of missionary bodies we noted at the outset may be divided into *four*, to be distinguished as they are found in

looser or closer connexion with the home Churches ; these including :

(1) Such associations as the China Inland Mission—commonly under personal direction, and addressed to some specific field—which operate outside of Church lines and draw their support from sympathizers of various Communion.

(2) Those of the non-Connexional Churches, such as recognize no corporate authority beyond that of the local *ecclesia*, and co-operate for missionary action through Societies distinct from the Church.

(3) Those of the Anglican Communion, which exercises its missionary functions informally by Societies outside the Church and its official purview.<sup>1</sup>

(4) Those that are identified with the Church itself, whose central governing body assumes the responsible direction of its work for Christ throughout the world.

The Methodist missionary system belongs to the fourth of the above categories. It springs from the primary conception of Missions as the charge of the entire Church of Christ, which our Lord imposed upon the body of His disciples by His farewell commission given to them when assembled in Galilee (Matt. xxviii. 16-20). The story of the Acts of the Apostles exhibits the primitive Church as animated by this idea, which its different leaders and different sections apprehended more or less completely, and as devoted in concert to the world-diffusion of the Gospel. The New Testament assumes that this purpose enters into normal Christian experience and the common saintship of believers ; it ran in the life-blood of the Apostolic Church. Foreign Missions hold, theoretically, a place in the economy of Methodism approximating to this assumption. What is truest in principle is bound to prove, in the long run, wisest in practice. The Church that ' puts the evangelization of the world first ' in its plans is on the right foundation ; in its practical system and the order and disposition of its affairs it proves itself orthodox and apostolic.

But it must not be supposed that all the advantages are on the side of the Connexional plan of the Foreign Missions. The more closely missionary work is bound up with the general life

<sup>1</sup> The Women's Auxiliary of the W.M.M.S. occupies this position, assisting the Parent Society independently, raising its own funds and appointing its own agents and officers in concert with the Missionary Society, but taking no orders from it or from the Conference.

of the Church, so much the more is it affected by prevalent spiritual maladies and declensions. Being one department amongst many in a crowded agenda, its claims suffer in Church assemblies from a competition, half-unconscious, perhaps, but unceasing and sometimes jealous. It must endure the delays and cautions imposed by domestic necessities, which are visible, clamorous, and close at hand. It has an inveterate and powerful enemy in the corporate selfishness characteristic of every public body that is not filled with the spirit of Jesus Christ. The balance of duty and the right perspective and proportion in the Church's vision of the world's need are hard to attain; their maintenance requires a largeness of heart and mind, a power to 'see afar off,' scarcely to be looked for in the average Church member and at the ordinary level of Christian public opinion, which in the main determines the resolutions of conferences and assemblies. Considerations of home policy naturally overbear those of foreign opportunity, and the cry from Macedonia, 'Come over and help us!' will fall in vain on ears in Asia preoccupied with local needs. Missionary officers may be appointed on other grounds besides that of their fitness for missionary service; and the more commanding the position and powers of the men composing the home executive, the more likely are they to be drawn into other engagements and distracted by the multiplicity and urgency of Connexional affairs. Where the Church officially directs the missionary campaign, the fighting force is liable to be hampered by half-hearted or ill-instructed followers, who impose a deadweight upon its march—by men who vote on missionary questions without close attention, and who, in rendering assistance at home, serve out of duty and because one must 'do something for Foreign Missions,' or go to the field abroad as conscripts rather than as volunteers, with little zest or courage for the battle, and ready on any fair excuse to return to camp.

Such are the drawbacks attaching to the attempt to conduct Foreign Missions under the auspices of the Church and in co-ordination with the rest of its corporate functions. Their hindering effect might be illustrated from the history of early Christianity; it is patent in the experience of modern Methodism and Presbyterianism. While we abide by our own principles in the matter, we do well to take account of the



dangers they involve and the strain they put on the faith and intelligence of the Church at large, and to recognize the high temper of patriotism toward the kingdom of God that they call for in our common Christian citizenship.

Where, on the other hand, the Church leaves her missionary duties to be discharged by a separate 'Society,' which appoints its officers, collects its revenues, chooses and stations its agents abroad, and superintends their work on its own authority, untrammelled by intrinsic influences and considerations, this freedom gives it notable elements of strength. Its constituents are, presumably, missionary zealots; its executive is selected purely *ad hoc*, and consists of experts and enthusiasts who 'do this one thing'; it is able to act with a promptness and decision that are frequently wanting to a Committee, which must refer its proposals to an official Church Conference, and is tempted to defer to all kinds of non-missionary susceptibilities. The perils and losses attaching to independence are perhaps less obvious than its gains; they are real and grave, both for the Church at home and for its work abroad. The missionary 'Society' outside the Church is at this capital disadvantage—that it may not claim, as of right, to enter every congregation and urge its plea on the hearers of the Gospel universally, nor lay the burden of advocacy on the Christian Minister as part of his stated duty, as is the case where Foreign Missions are acknowledged as the Church's collective care. The great soldier chafes at the 'red tape' of the War Office; at the political intrigues which check his movements and sometimes tie his hands; at the ignorant 'chatter' of Parliament and the bluster and froth of the newspapers. The endurance of all these is the price he has to pay for his dignity as servant of the State. But behind him there are the patriotic spirit, the wealth and resources, the lofty traditions and hereditary discipline of a mighty nation; and the Missionary who can count himself the representative of a great Church, who is Christ's ambassador to the heathen on all His people's behalf, has a force at his back, a wealth of sympathy and potential aid to draw upon, a corporate faith and a concert of prayer to God enlisted on his behalf, for the lack of which nothing else will compensate.

The normal history of Christian Foreign Missions may be compared to that of a British colony, with its four phases of



progress variously graduated and combined. There is, first, the stage of *private adventure*, under which Dr. Coke's voyages might be classed ; secondly, the stage of *joint-stock enterprise*, recognized and encouraged but not administered by the State, such as that of the old East India Company or the present management of Rhodesia in South-Central Africa—to this semi-political organization most of the English Missionary Societies present an analogy in their relations to the Church ; thirdly, the status of the *Crown Colonies and Dependencies*, under the full control of Parliament and the Colonial Office in London, but with extensive powers of local administration—such is the position, broadly speaking, of the Methodist and Presbyterian Missions on heathen fields ; and fourthly, the stage of full-grown nationhood within the Empire which four groups of British Colonies have attained (Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa). In the same regions the Church order of Methodism had previously reached a parallel development, through its 'Affiliated Conferences,' which became self-governing as they were self-sustaining, and remain bound to the mother Church by the ties of spiritual kinship and tradition. The second of the above stages the Methodist Missions have never known, any more than Canada (apart from the Hudson's Bay Territory), or New Zealand, in the history of the British Empire.

After this preamble we proceed to trace the development of the home executive of the Missionary Society, which we take to be, for all practical purposes, nothing else but the Methodist Church marshalled for foreign service. In January, 1784, there appeared a 'Plan of the Society for the establishment of Missions amongst the Heathen,' signed by Thomas Coke and Thomas Parker—the latter a Yorkshire Methodist and friend of Coke's. This project, to which John Fletcher of Madeley and other prominent Methodists subscribed, had in all likelihood been submitted to John Wesley before publication. It was based on the general model of charitable Societies—membership in the Association is to be conferred on 'every person who subscribes two guineas or more.' The subscribers are to hold an annual meeting, at which they shall elect a 'Committee of seven, or more,' to 'transact the business of the Society for the ensuing year,' and to engage and provide for the Missionaries employed. The appeal accompanying this

plan is addressed, in Coke's unmistakable style, to 'all real lovers of mankind,' and while the projectors do not disguise their Methodism, they invite the sympathy of 'the candid of every denomination.' The writer makes the characteristic and disputable statement that 'nothing more is required to constitute a Missionary to the heathen nations than good sense, integrity, great piety, and amazing zeal,' and believes that abundance of missionary agents so qualified can be supplied by Methodism. No reference is made in the plan to Mr. Wesley or the Conference, or to Church authority of any kind. The proposed Society was designed to be undenominational, and to act with the freedom of a private voluntary company. Its conception was an anticipation of 'The (London) Missionary Society' of eleven years later, rather than of the W.M.M.S., as this afterwards took shape. Coke's appeal met with but a slight response; he was soon engaged in other activities, and had to proceed single-handed with the task of missionary foundation. The project of 1784 was delightfully simple and sanguine, but it must be remembered that this was almost the first essay of the kind, and preceded Carey's movement amongst the Baptists by eight years.

Thomas Coke's first abortive attempt had no influence on the constitutional development of Wesleyan Missions. The earliest trace of foreign missionary organization appears in the *Minutes of Conference* in 1790. Since 1785 'Thomas Coke' and 'Francis Asbury' had figured as Joint 'Superintendents' for 'America' or for the 'U.S. of America.' From the same year onwards the West Indies occupy a place in the stations—in the first instance represented by 'Antigua' alone, under the heading of 'America.' Quickly other islands are added to the list, until in 1790 the 'West Indies' have grown to the importance of a separate province.

At this date it was apparent that Dr. Coke needed assistance in his care of the Missions, especially in view of his repeated and long absences from England, and a Committee was formed for 'the management of our W.I. affairs.' This was composed of Coke himself, three Missionaries on the field, and five of the leading English Preachers. No instructions are given to this Council, nor times of meeting fixed for it; the foreign members, we presume, were expected to act by correspondence and to advise with Dr. Coke on his visits. How this Council exercised

its large powers does not appear ; probably they were found to clash with Coke's superintendency, for the Committee appointed by the Conference of 1791—the first after Wesley's death—had the more modest duties assigned to it of 'examining accounts, letters, and Missionaries that are to be sent to the Islands,' while Thomas Coke is entitled the 'Delegate' of Conference 'for the West Indies.' From the new Committee—also of nine members—Coke's name disappears, with those of the three Missionaries previously included, and the President is put at the head of the nine, who are all Preachers in the English work.

The arrangements made in 1790 and 1791 were tentative, and lapsed after the latter date. Repeatedly in following years the Conference gives orders for the making of collections on behalf of the Missions, and lays down regulations 'for the appointment and control of Missionaries'; but Dr. Coke stands as the sole executive connecting Methodism at home with its agents abroad. Under the circumstances and at this stage the details of administration were best left in his hands. The Conference at every turn makes it clear, however, that he acts as its representative; what it consents to his doing it takes care to 'desire' or 'direct' that he shall do. In 1799, answering the question, 'Are there any further directions or regulations in respect to the West Indian Missions?' it affirms in the first place that, 'We, in the fullest manner, take those Missions under our own care, and consider Dr. Coke as our Agent'; and in 1800 insists that 'The Superintendents in foreign stations shall be responsible to the British Conference, and to their agent, Dr. Coke.' 'Accounts' from abroad are to be 'transmitted annually to Dr. Coke, or in his absence to the London Superintendent, to be laid before the Conference.' It is further resolved that 'the collections or disbursements at large shall be annually laid before the Conference, or before a Committee appointed by the Conference, that they shall also be transcribed into a ledger, and published as the Conference shall appoint.' As to the selection of Missionaries, it is determined 'that no person shall, in future, be employed as a Missionary who is not received upon trial by the Conference, according to our rules, or inserted in the List of Reserve.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Coke had, as it appears in some instances, called out for the West Indies Missionaries on his own responsibility who did not prove satisfactory.



‘The rules of discipline, respecting the admission and exclusion of members, &c.,’ it is enjoined, ‘shall be strictly enforced as in Europe, and the authority of the Superintendent (i.e. the Circuit Superintendent) shall be the same in every place.’

The Missionary legislation of 1799 and 1800 shows that the necessity was felt of bringing foreign operations formally and explicitly under Church control. While it was not desirable to interfere with Dr. Coke’s methods of finance and his conduct of business, since these, however peculiar, were successful in the main result, and since he stood in a unique fatherly and apostolic relation to the Churches abroad, the Conference deemed it needful to assert its jurisdiction over him. Had Dr. Coke been an ambitious and designing man, an *imperium in imperio* might easily have grown up under his rule on the foreign field, endangering the unity of Methodism; still greater was the danger lest a loose, irregular Methodism should be propagated amongst newly converted heathen people under the shepherding of pastors far removed from the control of their brethren, and themselves often young and inexperienced men. The chronic problems of Methodism in the conduct of its Foreign Missions—that of *foreign discipline* and that of *home finance*—have already made themselves felt.

The *Minutes* of the years 1801–1803, apart from the repeated orders on the subject of collections for the foreign work, relate only to minor points of discipline. Meanwhile, the finances of the Missions became embarrassed, and in 1803 young Jabez Bunting was called in to clear up the confusion which had arisen between their money accounts and those of the Book-Room. This difficulty occasioned the calling together of an informal Committee of London Ministers and laymen, the action of which gave some umbrage to Dr. Coke. The Committee of Privileges had been instituted, under his leadership, by the Conference of 1803—the earliest mixed committee of Methodism—which included seven influential laymen. It seemed quite a natural thing, in accordance with this precedent, to seek the advice of these same gentlemen in rectifying the affairs of the Foreign Missions. This is what Bunting and the London Preachers, in Dr. Coke’s absence from the country, appear to have done. The Conference of 1804, however, was not prepared for this extension of the principle of lay co-operation. Recognizing that Dr. Coke



must no longer be left to his own devices in missionary administration, it appointed a standing Committee of Finance and Advice, with Dr. Coke for President, and a responsible Treasurer and Secretary, before which 'all letters and communications whatever from the Missionaries shall be laid from time to time, and their advice taken upon the same.' The next provision shows how warily the Conference thought fit to walk, in consideration of Dr. Coke's twenty years' service to the Missions, his magnificent contribution to them, and the dictatorship which he had exercised for so long. 'If any difference of opinion should arise between the General Superintendent and the majority of the Committee concerning any important measure, both parties shall have the privilege of appealing to the Conference; but if, in such case, an immediate decision shall be necessary, the right thereof must, of course, remain with the General Superintendent till the ensuing Conference.' Differences of opinion certainly did arise, as is evidenced by the correspondence referred to on p. 39; but these were concerned mainly with items of expenditure and the raising of funds, and by patience and good temper were settled without dangerous friction. From that time to the present day the Missionary Committee in London has had a continuous existence, as forming the executive through which the Conference transacts and controls its foreign affairs.<sup>1</sup> On Dr. Coke's removal, the powers of General Superintendence which he exercised devolved upon it—especially upon its Secretaries, who were then increased to two in number, and subsequently to three, and four, (for a brief interval, five), as their work extended; but for the present the functions of the new body were strictly confined to those of 'Finance and Advice.' Coke was the 'Governor-General'; the Committee was his 'Council.' From this time forward, also, regular accounts, soon annually rendered, were forthcoming, along with a report of the State and progress of the Missions.

The constitution of the Committee created in 1804 was not destined to be permanent. It consisted of 'all the Preachers in London.' These at the time were thirteen in number, of

<sup>1</sup> Though this committee certainly existed in regular sessions and must have been statedly re-appointed from 1804 onwards to 1813, it is curious that no reference to it appears in the *Minutes* for the intervening years. This omission indicates the attitude of Dr. Coke, who was Secretary of the Conference for the greater part of this time (President a second time in 1805), towards the body which was created on purpose to supervise him!

whom seven only remained on the same ground after the next Conference, three of the survivors being Supernumeraries. A council composed of elements so shifting could hardly, in the nature of things, be efficient, especially in administration requiring so much expert knowledge. Moreover, the exclusion of the London laymen, whose aid had been sought in the emergency of the previous year (1803-4), and whose commercial connexions and business experience were almost indispensable to a Society of this nature, offended some of the worthiest friends of the missionary cause and impaired its consultative character. It was a patent anomaly that a 'Committee of Finance' should be composed of Preachers alone. The changed situation brought about through the loss of Dr. Coke is further indicated by the appointment in 1814 of *two* Secretaries for the business of the London Committee, and by the fact that in the next year the old name 'Committee of Finance and Advice' gives place to that of 'Executive Committee.' In 1815 a Lay Treasurer also is invited to share with his ministerial colleague the burden of financial responsibility and to sit at the committee-table.<sup>1</sup>

The Conference of 1815 called into existence an additional Committee for missionary purposes, the creation of which marks an important step in the constitutional development of Methodism. This new institution is defined in the following Resolutions :

'A Committee of Examination and Finance shall be annually chosen by the Conference, to meet on the Friday and Saturday which shall immediately precede the meeting of the ensuing Conference, and in the same city or town in which such Conference is to be held. The Committee shall consist of the President and Secretary of the Conference for the time being ; of the two General Treasurers, and those other members of the Executive Committee who can attend ; of nine other travelling Preachers ; and of nine respectable members of our Society,

<sup>1</sup> The minute to this effect runs as follows : 'Two joint treasurers for our General Missionary Fund shall be annually chosen by the Conference ; one of whom, for the convenience of the Missionaries, shall be a travelling Preacher stationed in London ; the other, a respectable member of our Society, not being a travelling Preacher.' The subsequent minute sets the financial proceedings of the Society on an orderly business footing : 'The General Treasurers shall appoint a banker in whose hands all moneys received by them for the support of the Society shall be regularly placed. No moneys shall be withdrawn from the bank without the mutual consent of the two Treasurers, except where one of them is absent and bills are presented which absolutely require immediate payment, and in such excepted cases the sums drawn out shall be specially notified to the Committee at their next meeting.'

not being travelling Preachers, resident in the District or Districts contiguous to the place in which that Conference is to assemble.

'To this Committee of Examination and Finance detailed accounts of our missionary receipts and disbursements during the preceding year shall be submitted for investigation, together with every question connected with the financial department of our missionary business; and no such question shall be brought before the Conference until a special report of their opinion has been drawn up and presented.'

This was the first of the 'Committees of Review,' afterwards established on the same method for other departments, which were continued until laymen were admitted to the Conference in 1878, when the Representative (as distinguished from the Pastoral) Session took over its administrative functions. The Committees of Review fulfilled for over sixty years a growingly important part in the Methodist economy. They furnished a means of eliciting the judgement of representative laymen on questions of Church policy and administration, at the same time initiating them into Connexional business and educating them for larger responsibilities. Their resolutions came to be reported in the annual published *Minutes*, along with those of Conference itself. While they examined departmental proceedings for the year past, new proposals and estimates were submitted to them in order to be sifted and matured for presentation to the Conference, which in most instances accepted what had been digested for it. These Preparatory Committees supplied an excellent means of transition from the purely ministerial government which Wesley left behind him to the constitution that now exists.

In its dealings with the legislature and civil authorities Conference first realized its need of skilled lay counsel, hence the institution of the Committee of Privileges in 1803. In the department of Foreign Missions this necessity was almost as acutely felt, especially after the removal of Dr. Coke, who was a lawyer and versatile public man. The acknowledgement, it must be confessed, was somewhat tardy and reluctant, but by degrees the administration of missionary work was broadened, and the Missionary Committee of Examination and Finance led the way to the full association of the laity with the ministry in Connexional business. Simultaneously with the creation of



the Committee of Review, the Home Missions in England, commenced under Dr. Coke's auspices in 1806, were formed into regular Circuits. Their deficiencies of income were transferred to the Contingent Fund (known until recent years as 'The Home Mission and Contingent Fund'), for the replenishment of which the long familiar 'July Collection' was set on foot; from this date they ceased to be a charge upon the Missionary Society.

Jabez Bunting's hand may be traced in the legislation of 1815, which did not, indeed, go so far as he designed. Long before this time, his son states,<sup>1</sup> 'My father had come to the conclusion that the laity, equally with the clergy, are bound and entitled to assist in the management of the temporal affairs of the Church.' As early as 1801 it was enacted that the Circuit Stewards should be admitted to District meetings, with the right 'to advise at the settlement of all financial matters.'<sup>2</sup> But there was no thought at that time of carrying the principle of lay representation any higher. The anomaly remained that while 'all local finances, including those of chapels, were then, as now, under the control of lay officers, the funds collected for the common purposes of the Connexion were received and distributed by Ministers only.' At his instance a 'mixed' Committee had been formed in 1813 for the management of Woodhouse Grove School, then just opened in Yorkshire—the first of such Connexional administrative bodies to be created (the Committee of Privileges was of a different order). This precedent established a principle whose application could not be arrested. During the year 1814-5 much discussion was going on respecting the emergency in missionary affairs arising from Dr. Coke's death. Joseph Entwisle, writing from London to Bunting (then in Leeds), expresses his dissatisfaction, and that of others, with the existing Committee of the London Preachers, who had charge jointly of the business of the Book-Room and Foreign Missions, and adds, 'I don't see that any danger would arise from a few respectable laymen in our Committee of Management, as it respects receipts and expenditure *alone*. Think of this!' In a subsequent letter Entwisle resumes his parable with

<sup>1</sup> pp. 228-9 of the *Life of Dr. Bunting*, Vol. I.

<sup>2</sup> See the *Methodist Magazine* for December, 1801. This important and critical resolution of Conference is not found in the *Minutes*.



growing courage: 'If the Conference agree to incorporate laymen with Preachers in the acting Committee, we shall be enabled to do more for our Missions, and I cannot see any chance of injurious influence.' What seems to-day the merest common sense, a century ago filled with alarm the minds of many of the fathers of Methodism! A little later Richard Watson writes to George Marsden: 'We must, if we mean to preserve and extend our missionary work, have recourse to some method of securing greater vigour in the executive department. The fact is, I believe the London Preachers have more on their hands than they can possibly do, and consequently nothing is done quite as well as it should be.' Bunting's judgement is disclosed by a letter to Edmund Grindrod written shortly before the Conference: 'We (i.e. the Leeds District Meeting) recommend a Committee to draw up and prepare the plan of a *new constitution* for the management of our missionary affairs, for which, we think, the time is now fully come, and the way made open for the removal of Dr. Coke. We must, in a prudent way, meet the wishes of our people on that business; and I believe that the admission of some respectable laymen as members of the Managing Committee may be guarded so as to do no harm and much good.' The Conference, however, would only bring itself, at this stage, to introduce the 'lay element' into the Missionary Committee in a minute proportion, and in the quite indispensable form of a Lay Treasurer. The Pre-Conference Committee of Examination and Finance, already referred to, seems to have been instituted by way of compromise, in lieu of the introduction of laymen into the Missionary Executive.

The latter step could not be long delayed. The new Committee of Examination and Finance mooted in 1817 the forming of a permanent 'Constitution' for the Foreign Missionary Department, such as Jabez Bunting had desiderated in his letter to Grindrod of two years before. Watson was instructed by the Committee above named to prepare a plan for 'a Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society.' This was laid before the Conference and 'approved' in 'its object and outline,' but referred to the 'Executive Committee' for consideration during the ensuing year, with directions 'to make such additional arrangements as may be necessary for perfecting it and carrying it into full effect.' The sketch plan of 1817 was

certainly inadequate, and must have been hastily prepared in the few days between the Committee of Review and the discussion of missionary affairs in the Conference. It consisted of five articles, with a preamble defining the relation of the proposed 'General W.M.M. Society' to the 'Auxiliary Societies' of the Districts and the 'Branch Societies' of the Circuits, and giving directions for the holding of the annual meeting of the Society in London, for the making up of yearly accounts and the presentation of reports. Nothing is said about the constitution of the Executive Committee and its relation to the Conference, nor about the status of Missionaries, their selection, appointment, and discipline.

The matured plan of 1818, drawn up under the title of 'Laws and Regulations of the General Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society'—the joint work of Watson and Bunting, and bearing the impress of the legal, luminous, and comprehensive mind of the latter—is a document thoroughly worthy of the occasion, and suitable to furnish, as it has done, the basis of a great and enduring institution. This elaborate scheme contains in the form finally adopted by the Conference, eighteen articles, and fills five and a half pages of large octavo in the standard edition of the *Minutes of Conference*. The provisions of this Magna Charta of the Missionary Society may be summarized under a few heads :

I. *Description of the Society*.—Articles I.–IV., first, define the 'General W.M.M. Society,' stating that its object is 'to excite and combine, on a plan more systematic and efficient than has heretofore been accomplished, the exertions of the Societies and congregations of the Wesleyan Methodists in the support and enlargement of the Foreign Missions, which were first established by the Rev. John Wesley, A.M., the Rev. Thomas Coke, LL.D., and others.' Next, they lay down the qualifications for membership, and go on to embrace in it the Auxiliary (District) and, under these, the Circuit Missionary Societies already formed, or to be formed hereafter. Article VII. includes 'all benefactors of ten pounds and upwards, and all subscribers of one guinea and upwards annually, to any of the Auxiliary or Branch Societies,' along with these who so contribute to the General Society (Article III.) in the aggregate membership of the latter, with the title 'as such to a copy of the annual report' ; and Article VIII. confers the same privilege

on 'all persons who collect to the amount of one shilling and upwards weekly, or five shillings and upwards monthly. Article IX. gives order for the 'Annual public meeting of the members and friends of this Society' to be held in London.

2. *Financial Arrangements*.—Articles V. and VI. relate to the transmission of moneys locally collected, along with the names of local members of the Society to head quarters, thus linking the Auxiliaries to the Central Executive. So far the plan of 1817 is repeated, with greater fullness and formality of statement. The important provisions that follow form the 'additional arrangements necessary for perfecting it.'

3. *The New Executive*.—Article X. entrusts, 'in the intervals of the annual assemblies' of the Conference, 'the superintendence of the collection and disbursement of all moneys raised for the Foreign Missions, and also the general management of the Missions,' to a Committee, which is to consist of 'the President and Secretary of the Conference for the time being, and of forty-eight other members.' This number is to be made up of Ministers and laymen in equal proportions, of whom at least one-third (eight of each order) are to be chosen from the country, the remaining thirty-two from Circuits in or near London. The Committee is directed to meet monthly. The President of the Conference is to be its Chairman; failing him the Chairman of the London District, or a London Superintendent. The right to attend meetings of committee, 'and to vote,' is conferred on any Methodist Minister, who is an annual guinea-subscriber, 'and on the Treasurer, Secretary, or other principal member from every Auxiliary District Society' who is within reach. Article XI. determines the rotation that shall take place in the appointment of lay members of Committee. (The itinerancy secured sufficiency of change on the ministerial side.) Article XII. speaks of the 'two or more General Treasurers' (lay and ministerial), who 'shall be annually appointed by the Conference.' Article XIII. deals with the three Secretaries—'of the Methodist Ministers<sup>1</sup> stationed for the time being in or near London,'<sup>2</sup> one of them

<sup>1</sup> So far as we have observed, this is the first occurrence of the designation Methodist Minister' in any official document.

<sup>2</sup> Neither in the original plan nor by subsequent regulation have the functions of the several Secretaries been differentiated; they were left to distribute the work of the office amongst them at their convenience, being held jointly responsible for the whole.



shall reside at the Mission House (see p. 100), and 'devote himself on weekdays, in general, to the service of the Missions exclusively, subject, however, to all the general rules of the Connexion respecting a regular change of station.' Along with the general correspondence of the Society and the keeping of its books, Article XV. charges the Secretaries with the duty of annually drawing up 'the plan for the stationing of the Missionaries,' which is to be submitted to the Committee, and then for ratification to the Conference. The Missionary Committee thus created is a body signally different from that which had existed hitherto. In its size and the breadth of its representative character the new Board of Missions went far beyond any Executive which Methodism previously possessed. Its creation was calculated to give increased Connexional weight and importance to the Foreign Missions, and its constitution set the model for that of all future Committees which should have to deal with great administrative interests of the Church, and finally for the construction of the Representative Chamber of the Conference.

4. *Missionary Appointment and Discipline on the Field.*—Under Articles XIV. (which has six sub-sections) and XVI. the Conference carefully reserves for itself, in its pastoral responsibility, all that relates to the selection and location of missionary candidates, and to their oversight upon the field in regard to doctrine, character, and ministerial efficiency. The Executive Committee is allowed, however, 'in cases of pressing emergency' and 'with the consent of the President,' to fill vacancies on Mission Stations occurring between Conferences. It is empowered also, on emergency, to 'recall' any Missionary who misconducts himself, putting him upon his trial before the ensuing Conference, or, in case of necessity for immediate decision, before the Preachers of the London District. It may, therefore, suspend, on *prima facie* grounds, its foreign agents, but it cannot dismiss them, and can only act as prosecutor, not as judge, where trial is necessary. The separation between pastoral and general administrative functions, which pervades the Methodist economy, was thus very definitely maintained. The above legislation reinforces and completes earlier resolutions of Conference on the subject, whose object was to bring missionary discipline into line with that of home Methodism. From the beginning the foreign



stations were recognized as constituting 'Circuits,' administered by their 'Superintendents,' like those in England, but placed under the oversight of the 'General Superintendent' of Missions appointed by the Conference. In 1806 the 'District' organization had been introduced into the West Indian Missions, according to the English plan, and afterwards into other Missions as need arose, the foreign chairman being 'annually appointed by the Conference at home.' Regular local jurisdiction and discipline were thus established on the foreign field. The District minutes, including all financial accounts, are to be sent, however, not to the Secretary of Conference (as at home), but to the Missionary Secretary in London, the District Meeting being made 'accountable to the General Superintendent and the Missionary Committee,' and through them to the Conference. These arrangements are presumed in the regulations of 1818, which further, as we have seen, give authority to the Committee to fetch home and put on trial any defaulting Missionary, independently of the action of the District Meeting or its chairman.

The two remaining articles are of a supplementary character. Article XVII. directs the continuance of the pre-Conference Committee created in 1815 'for the satisfaction of the numerous country friends of the Society.' This had evidently proved a popular institution. While the functions of this gathering remain unaltered, it drops the title of the Committee of 'Examination and Finance,' and is described as 'a special meeting of the General Committee,' to which there shall be invited 'nine Preachers, and nine other members of the Methodist Society resident in the neighbourhood' of the Conference town, 'together with the Treasurers and Secretaries of the different Auxiliary and Branch Societies in the vicinity, and such other leading country friends of the Methodist Missions as can conveniently attend.' It is added that 'any suggestions for the improvement or extension of the missionary concerns of the Connexion which this special meeting may deem it expedient to adopt shall be minuted by the Secretaries, and promptly considered by the Conference, or at the subsequent regular meetings of the General Committee in London.' The Committee of Review furnished a useful occasion for ventilating missionary questions and a means of eliciting the sentiments of the Society's workers up and down the country. Some

such gathering, in which the official staff and committee should annually meet representatives of the local Auxiliaries from various parts of the Connexion, might even now be of service to the Society.<sup>1</sup>

The last article (XVIII.) enjoins on all concerned *prayer* for God's blessing upon Foreign Missions—those of our own or of 'similar Societies of other denominations'—'as an indispensable part of daily Christian duty.' It urges, in particular, the holding of 'monthly missionary prayer-meetings in every chapel in the Methodist Connexion,' suggesting that at these meetings the *Missionary Notices* (which began to be published in 1816) should be used for conveying news and information.

The Laws and Regulations of 1818, by lapse of time, became obsolete as to some of their details and provisions, but they remained unaltered for seventy years, and when in 1884-85 they were revised and put into the shape in which they now appear at the head of the annual report as the 'Rules and Regulations of the W.M.M.S.' the old plan was retained both in substance and in form. Further slight modifications have been introduced since 1885. The main alterations then made touch the following points :

1. The appointment of the Committee, of the two Treasurers (as before) and the Secretaries (number undetermined), is to be made 'in accordance with such regulations' on the part of Conference 'as from time to time be in force.' This gives to the composition of the Executive the requisite elasticity. The Committee has been enlarged by successive steps, taken from the year 1869 onwards, until it now (1910) includes, with a considerable quota of *ex-officio* members, 4 ex-Missionaries, 36 London Ministers or laymen, 50 such from the country, and 70 chosen by the 35 Districts of the Connexion ; numbering in all 183 persons.<sup>2</sup>

2. The Committee of the London Preachers (in 1818 a small

<sup>1</sup> In May each year a meeting of District Secretaries and Treasurers is held in the Mission House, and is most useful.

<sup>2</sup> The clause in the 'Laws and Regulations' of 1818 permitting ministerial subscribers of a guinea or upwards to meet and vote with the Committee was rescinded ; it put an invidious premium on wealth, and might have made the privilege purchasable. In fact, the whole principle of membership and representation in a religious Society as based on money-subscription is questionable on New Testament grounds. While formally admitted in the constitution of the W.M.M.S., it is practically inoperative. 'The Treasurer, Secretary, or other principal member from every Auxiliary District Society,' who were, in 1818, invited to attend and vote when in London, have been reduced to 'one Minister and one layman nominated by each District Synod.'

body), to which cases of emergency in foreign discipline were referred, is replaced by 'a Special Committee of Discipline, consisting of the ministerial officers and members of the Missionary Committee, together with three Ministers from each London District, annually appointed by the Conference.'

No essential change has been made in the system established in 1818. The Missionary Society remains in form a distinct organization, consisting of members qualified by pecuniary subscription, but in its operative principles an agency of the Conference, being in effect the Methodist Society mobilized for foreign missionary action.

With a view to improve the local home organization, the Conference of 1887 directed the appointment at each September Synod of District Sub-Committees for Foreign Missions, furnished with their ministerial and lay Secretaries, consisting in all of twelve members (with power of co-option), which should make systematic inquiries into the state of the Missionary Funds and the working of the Branch Societies in each Circuit, in order to report thereupon to the May District Synod. It will be remembered that the Missionary Society originated with the District Auxiliaries—the first of them founded in Leeds on October 6, 1813—which were formed spontaneously in their several localities and were afterwards approved by Conference and embodied in the General Missionary Society. Under the action of these District Auxiliary Societies the Branch Societies of the Circuits, which are the main feeders of the Missionary Fund, were called into existence. The Auxiliaries, as one by one they constituted themselves, appointed their District Treasurers and Secretaries and elected their own Committee in their annual public meetings. The nomination of the District Treasurers and Secretaries came to be made subsequently in the September meeting of the District Synod, but the Auxiliary Committee survives in certain Districts side by side with the new District Sub-Committee, though its functions appear generally to have shrunk to those of making arrangements for the District Missionary Anniversaries. The defect of the old Auxiliary Society was that it stood in no determinate relation to the Synod, which reviews all Church departments of the District, including Foreign missionary affairs with the rest, and was not required to report thereto. The District Sub-Committee of Foreign Missions supplied,



therefore, a missing link in the system of the Society, and the Auxiliary Committee, in the instances of its survival, serves chiefly as a memento of the early days of the Society, of the generous succour brought by the people of the northern Methodist Districts to the distressed Missionary Fund orphaned by Dr. Coke's departure, when Conference and the London Executive had failed to make provision for its necessities. In 1896 the Conference directed that where the original District Auxiliary Committee for Foreign Missions continued in being, the newly created Synod Committee should form a Sub-Committee thereof, and should present to the Synod the reports and suggestions which the larger Committee might wish to make.

The rules of the Auxiliary Missionary Societies adopted at Leeds in 1813 provided for the establishment of 'Branch Societies' in every Circuit, with their Treasurer, Secretaries, and Committee, repeating in miniature the constitution of the District Auxiliary. But this machinery had not been linked up in any formal way to the Quarterly Meeting of the Circuit, and in many instances the Circuit Foreign Missionary Committee had fallen into abeyance. The Quarterly Meeting was not required until 1888 to examine the foreign missionary accounts of the Circuit, although it had been the general usage for missionary affairs to be annually reported upon and reviewed at this meeting. It was felt to be necessary to complete the reform of District organization made in 1887 by a similar improvement in the Circuit machinery, and in 1893 Conference 'resolved' that a Foreign Missionary Committee, including a Treasurer and two Secretaries, should be appointed annually for each Circuit at the September Quarterly Meeting. On this Committee should devolve 'the entire management of all matters throughout the Circuit which affect the interests of the Missionary Society.' It is to report its work for the year, and present the accounts, duly audited, to the September Quarterly Meeting. It would be impossible to express more distinctly than this legislation does the responsibility incumbent on the constituency of every local Methodist Church for the promotion of the work of the Gospel throughout the world.

As the operations of the Society extended and the General Missionary Committee multiplied its numbers, it was found necessary for efficient working, and feasible with the greater



variety of talent and experience available, to subdivide its work, and smaller Committees were formed to deal, under the guidance of the Secretaries, with the various branches of administration. Quite early it was necessary to introduce a 'Sub-Committee of Finance,' or of 'Finance and General Purposes,' as this was designed later. The Conference interposed in 1839 to create 'a Medical Sub-Committee,' not with a view to establishing Medical Missions (an arm of the service hardly contemplated for forty years after this), but to superintend the medical examination of candidates and to advise on matters of health and climate.<sup>1</sup> The present elaborate system of 'Sectional Committees,' which meet once a month in preparation for the General Committee and have their appointed Chairman and regular procedure, is of recent formation. These standing Sub-Committees are six in number, their departments being respectively *Estimates and Finance*, *Home Organization*, *Ceylon and India*, *China*, *Europe and South Africa*, *West Indies and West Africa*. Besides these there are Sub-Committees for *General Purposes*, *Foreign Accounts*, *Medical Missions* (to which are attached a number of *Associated Doctors*, these forming, in conjunction with the medical representatives of the General Committee, the *Medical Advisory Board*), and on *Qualifications of Lay Candidates*, which meet occasionally as required. Proposals from the four 'Field' Committees which involve finance must pass through the 'Estimates and Finance' Committee before they are presented to the General Committee. In this way the Missionary Committee has organized itself for its highly complete and diversified work.

The constitution of the Society on its home side, and in its working machinery, has thus been carefully and skilfully framed, and built up during the hundred years of its existence. The Missionary Executive represents Methodism in miniature, and is the most powerful and far-reaching arm of the Church's public service. No important organic development has taken place since the establishment of the Synodal District Committee in 1887. Organization on the field will come to be considered at a later stage.

<sup>1</sup> Special Sub-Committees were appointed from time to time for incidental purposes, as, e.g., in 1839 and following years, to report on the affairs of the Polynesian missionary ship.

### III

#### AFTER THE NAPOLEONIC WAR

The French Revolution and the New World Polity in Europe—England's New Possessions—'A Dispensation of the Gospel'—The Turkish Empire—Spanish America—Missions and the New Movement—Colonial Development—Reaction at Home—George Canning's Administration—National Politics and Slavery—Sierra Leone—India—Castlereagh's India Bill—Dr. Coke's Mission to the East.

A SOCIETY which deems itself bidden to carry the Gospel 'into all the world' has its field marked out and the lines of its action determined by the world-movements of the time; it must follow His guiding hand who controls the course of mundane affairs and shapes the destiny of nations. Sacred and secular history are one in the unity of God's everlasting Kingdom. We have seen, in the first chapter of this work, how the missionary awakening at the close of the eighteenth century and the new consciousness of a world-vocation in the Protestant Churches were conditioned by the national developments of the Revolutionary age. At this point in our narrative we may pause to look round once more on the world-field, in the aspect it presented and the direction its affairs were taking after the close of the Napoleonic War; for to this changed condition of things the mission of the Church had now to address itself. The world of the eighteenth century had passed away in the storm of the French Revolution, terminating with the momentous appearance of Napoleon Bonaparte. Out of the throes of this convulsion a new Europe, a new world-polity, had come to birth. However passionate the reaction, after the years 1789-1815 things could never be the same again, either for France or for Christendom. A fresh chapter was opened in the story of humanity.

The Revolution from the outset bore a universal stamp, and assumed an international character. On this account it might claim to be the offspring of Roman Catholicism, while its great watchword of 'Liberty' was the bequest of Protestantism.

From its centre in Paris it infected the whole of Europe. The early and better leaders of the French people, though doctrinaire in principle and bombastic in language, were genuinely possessed with humanitarian enthusiasm ; they raised the red flag and sang the ' Marseillaise ' in the name of the wronged and downtrodden everywhere. France was electrified by the opening words of the American Declaration of Independence, ' All men are born free and equal ' ; she rang them out in tones that shook civilized mankind. In their fierce way, the Parisian democrats were fain to ' proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison doors to them that were bound.' The Revolutionary Generals skilfully used the catchwords of liberty and the rights of man, and by this means enlisted the multitudes in the lands they invaded against the old dynasties and the feudal oppressions under which they had groaned for generations. The miseries entailed by the subsequent wars, and the despotism of the Napoleonic Empire, provoked a swift reaction ; but the seeds of revolt the invaders brought with them remained in the soil of Italy and Germany, to spring up in later days.

Napoleon translated the universalism of the Revolutionists into his grandiose ideal of a federation of the peoples, in which France and his own house should hold the hegemony by right of genius and military prowess. The Emperor's ambition had no less than a world-scope. He seized on Egypt early in his career, thinking by this conquest to secure the key of India and Asia ; but for England's invincible navy no human power could have hindered him from winning, for the time, the mastery of the globe. He had grasped, with the force of a colossal genius, the idea of the world as a human whole, that might be brought under one political dominion, as it is one in commerce and in blood. Napoleon looked on himself as the heir of Charlemagne and the Caesars, and it was in the interests of his wider policy rather than from regard to the welfare of his country—certainly not from motives of personal faith—that he came to terms with the Papacy and re-established the Roman Catholic Church in France.

Napoleon's world-conception did not die with him. In the struggle to shake off his yoke the Governments of Europe were at last united, and put aside the jealousies on which he had successfully played. The slumbering national spirit of



Germany was evoked, along with that of England and of Russia, and the tyrant was crushed by the revulsion of mankind against his insatiate and remorseless egotism. Napoleon had given the European peoples a solidarity, if it was only in hatred and fear, such as they had never before possessed. He called into existence to overthrow him *the Concert of Europe*; and from 1815 onwards this idea begins to replace in international politics the traditional principle of 'The Balance of Power.' In spite of the deep-seated rivalries and renewed wars between the great powers, and notwithstanding the portentous growth of their armaments in recent times, the new notion has persisted. Throughout the nineteenth century there has grown the sense, pervasive though imperfect, that civilization is a unity, that the ruling nations form a commonwealth, and are collectively responsible for the order of the world.

England had passed unscathed, though profoundly stirred, through the ordeal of the Revolution; and the long duel with Napoleon left her exhausted but victorious. Since the Battle of Trafalgar (1805) she was mistress of the sea; and when the French Emperor, by the Berlin Decree of 1806, interdicted to her the ports and markets of Europe, she replied by cutting off Europe from tropical produce and making herself the entrepôt of oceanic commerce. By the close of the war all the colonies of France, those of Holland (which had been virtually annexed by France), with many of the Spanish insular possessions besides, had fallen into her hands. The greater part of these she restored at the Treaty of Vienna (1814-15); but others, important for the maritime communications and future expansion of her Empire, were retained. Amongst the acquisitions then secured were *Ceylon* and *the Cape Colony*, wrested from the Dutch, both of which were valued chiefly as strengthening our hold upon India. Until the digging of the Suez Canal the Cape of Good Hope commanded the sea-route to the Far East.

It is noticeable that England's new possessions in Ceylon and the Cape of Good Hope formed the immediate objective of Coke's missionary expedition of 1813, which gave occasion for the establishment of the Missionary Society. *Java* was included in Coke's programme, the reasons for this inclusion lying in the capture of that great and rich island—a second



India, as it was called—by the English forces in 1811. For five years Java remained in British occupation, under the rule of Sir Stamford Raffles, who was one of the ablest administrators of his day. It was little supposed that a property so valuable would be willingly surrendered. However, Great Britain gave this prize back at the Peace to Holland, along with Surinam and (Dutch) Guiana and several West Indian islands, while she retained Demerara in addition to the colonies previously named, paying £6,000,000 for them in compensation. The inclusion of Java in the missionary scheme of 1813 was due to the expectation that this island would remain under the British flag; the Dutch Government had proved itself in the West Indies quite intolerant of Methodist Missions. Some years later it formally excluded from its East Indian possessions all Missions conducted by subjects of foreign powers.

Malta was another of the conquests of the Great War henceforth attached to the British Crown. This little spot has become a pivot of England's maritime power; and to Malta, central as it is for the Mediterranean and furnishing a stepping-stone to the East, the eyes of missionary projectors were quickly turned. The Ionian Islands were also recognized by the Treaty of Vienna as under the British Protectorate. They had been ruled by Venice, and were finally handed over by the British Government to the Kingdom of Greece in 1864. It was not long before a Methodist Missionary was found at Zante, being stationed there with a view to the spread of the Gospel in Greece, but our hopes in this direction were disappointed. Mauritius, acquired at this time from France, entered into the plans of the Missionary Society. (The new possessions of the British Crown evidently attracted the eyes of our missionary leaders at this time; their acquisition laid a duty upon the Church at home. It is noticeable how closely Methodism has followed, or in some instances preceded, the expansion of the Empire. Even to-day the Missions we have lying beyond its borders are comparatively few and small.)

The unparalleled naval and commercial ascendancy to which England was lifted by the issue of the Great War enhanced in the awakened Churches the sense of national responsibility for the heathen world; the conviction was impressed on Christian men that to England a unique 'Dispensation of the Gospel' had been committed for the coming times. Her preservation

in defiance of the power that trampled upon Europe, the signal deliverances she had repeatedly experienced amid overwhelming hostility and the most threatening conjunctures, filled religious minds with awe, and gave indication, hardly to be mistaken, of some high purpose of God attached to Britain's destiny. As the course of the past struggle was reviewed, the exclamation rose from pious lips, 'This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.' Protection and honour so peculiar, shown to one chosen land, called for a new dedication upon its part. What fitter end could the Father of mankind have in view than that through the people He had shielded with His might, and in whose hand He had placed the keys of the world's traffic, the Gospel of His glory should be published to the ends of the earth? Such were the reflections that inspired many a missionary sermon and speech in the years which followed Trafalgar and Waterloo. This consciousness of national obligation, and the deeply pondered question, 'What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits towards me?' went mightily to swell the tide of enthusiasm and generosity by which the Missionary Societies were borne along during the first generation after the close of the Napoleonic wars.

The Revolution called forth a powerful reaction in European thought and society, whose effects appeared in many directions in the movements of the nineteenth century. The restoration of the Bourbons in France, and the formation of the 'Holy Alliance' amongst the absolutist rulers of Europe, were manifestations of this nature. Results more important, and more nearly affecting our inquiry, were the revival of Romanism and Mediaevalism in religion, the rehabilitation of the Jesuit Order, the Tractarian Movement in England, and the rise in Catholic Europe of Ultramontanism, reaching its climax in the declaration of Papal Infallibility in 1870. If Protestantism was aroused to her missionary duty, she found Romanism also alert and stirring, ready to counter her operations on almost every Mission field, while her forces in this country were checked and partly neutralized through the sacerdotalist revival. By the middle of the nineteenth century 'Giant Pope' was wider awake and in more vigorous health, to all appearance, than he had been since the beginning of the seventeenth.

There were two quarters of the political world, however, far

removed from each other, in which it soon became evident that the impulse of the American War of Independence and the French Revolution continued in powerful operation. Toward the end of the eighteenth century the Turkish Empire seemed on the verge of extinction. Internal decay was fast advancing. Russia had torn away most of its northern provinces across the Danube; its existence was at the mercy of the Christian powers, whose jealousies alone had given a reprieve to the barbarous Ottoman rule. The French Revolution and the confusion that ensued diverted attention from the Eastern Question, and saved Turkey from impending doom. Her impotent condition was illustrated by the proposals mooted between Napoleon and Alexander I of Russia, in 1808, for the partition of the Turkish dominions; it was subsequently proved by the march of the Russians to Adrianople in 1829, and of Mehemet Ali's Egyptian army across Asia Minor in 1832-3. Servia had already, in 1806-7, risen successfully against the Sultan's rule. Under these conditions the Greek War of Independence broke out in the year 1821, greatly disturbing the Holy Alliance and the Concert of Europe. Mehemet Ali, as Pasha of Egypt, came to the aid of his suzerain at Constantinople, and might have crushed the Greeks, but for the destruction of his fleet by the Allied Powers at Navarino in 1829, which brought the ferocious struggle to an end. England encouraged the Greeks, and lovers of freedom from many countries, amongst whom the poet Byron was the most distinguished, rallied to their help. The liberation of Greece, which was effected against the policy of the conservative powers, showed the spirit of liberty and progress to be vigorously alive.

This phenomenal event, followed by the successful rebellion of the Egyptian Pasha against the Khalif, appeared to portend the dissolution of Moslem political power and the dawning of a brighter day for the lands of the Eastern Mediterranean, that had lain so long under its blighting shadow. The hopes thus excited prompted the various attempts of the Missionary Societies made at that period to obtain a footing in the Levant and the Holy Land. These have had conspicuous success in the case of the educational work set on foot by the American Board of Missions, but otherwise have largely failed. The Crimean War, and the revival of Ottoman power and of



Muhammadan fanaticism, which English policy, unhappily, has furthered, obstructed the advance of the Gospel during the last century in that direction. The old Eastern Churches have shown through the whole century of progress and reform but few signs of awakening from their long torpor.

On the opposite side of the world there was taking place, simultaneously with the Eastern movement we have described, a political change, the import of which is even now imperfectly realized. It was in recognizing the independence of the Spanish-American Republics that George Canning uttered his famous saying in the British Parliament, to the effect that 'a new world' must be 'called in to redress the balance of the old!' In their defence President Monroe of the United States, in 1823, made the proclamation which cried 'Hands off' to all European rulers disposed to meddle with the Western continent. Within the years 1809-24 Central and South America in their entirety shook off European control, and a political transformation was effected—the widest in extent that history records as accomplished in so short a time. This revolution embraced Brazil, which declared itself in 1822 a sovereign empire ruled by a branch of the Portuguese Royal family, and so continued until 1889, when the Government became republican. It excluded only Guiana—divided by the Treaty of Vienna into three provinces, assigned respectively to Britain, Holland, and France—along with the strip of mainland fronting Jamaica, known as 'British Honduras.' Apart from these enclaves, the whole stretch of America, extending over seventy-nine degrees of latitude, from the northern borders of Mexico to Patagonia, passed after a struggle of only fifteen years from the sway of Spain and Portugal to become a system of Independent States. The magnitude and significance of this event cannot be overlooked; the liberation of South America forms not the least momentous consequence of the French Revolution.

The wars of Spain with France and England toward the end of the eighteenth century had loosened the ties, maintained for more than two centuries, between those great colonies and the mother country. The disablement of Spain during the Peninsular War of 1808-14, and the time of political disorder which followed its conclusion, brought about the actual severance, to which the colonists were invited by the example of North America and the spread of revolutionary and republican



ideas. The spirit of rebellion was inflamed by resentment against the commercial isolation enforced by the mother country, and against the maladministration of their affairs. British soldiers and sailors, discharged at the close of the Great War, and volunteering in the cause of liberty, effectively aided the South American insurgents. In our own generation Spain has been stripped by our American cousins of her remaining colonies—Cuba, Porto Rico, and the Philippines. While they broke away from the Spanish and Portuguese dominion, the new countries preserved the original stamp in language, institutions, and spirit, as distinctly as the United States of the north retained their English character. Like the Spanish Peninsula in Europe, so South America among the continents is secluded and self-contained. For this reason both are apt to be disregarded by politicians and students of history. But it would be a grave mistake to imagine Spanish power effete, and to treat the type of Latin civilization and Christianity it represents as an antiquated system and a negligible quantity in world-affairs. Next to the English tongue, the Spanish is to-day the most widely current in foreign markets and exchanges. The New Spain overseas, as she grows in wealth and political stability, will know how to hold her own against Anglo-Saxon encroachment, and may revive the glory of the old Spain of centuries ago.

But what, the reader asks, has all this to do with Methodist Missions? Directly, little enough. The Methodist Episcopal Church is indeed represented in Brazil, and we ourselves have been at work, with a moderate degree of success, in Demerara ever since it became a British possession (in 1803). Our operations are an insignificant factor in the life of the continent. On the other hand, the influence of the South American Revolution upon British policy, and therefore on the course and movements of the Missionary Societies, was very considerable. The calamitous experience of Spain, recalling with emphasis the lesson taught by the rebellion of New England forty years earlier, was not lost upon British statesmen. They addressed themselves, when the French War was over, to the fostering of the Colonies. Their value to the home country had been demonstrated, as they had sustained her commerce, and provided harbourage for her shipping, and indispensable material, in the stress of war. Canning in particular, the

disciple of William Pitt in statecraft and of Adam Smith in economics, showed remarkable insight into the principles on which empire and liberty may be combined. The legislation which he carried out in the years 1822-7, aided by Huskisson, made large extensions of commercial freedom to the American colonies, and laid the foundation of their prosperity, and of the loyalty and good understanding between Britain and her children abroad that have prevailed throughout the last century. Local self-government at the same epoch was conceded step by step, but more tentatively, and sometimes grudgingly, until the Act of 1840 gave to Canada a definite civil constitution of the British type that has served as a model for other colonies.

The old colonial system, practised by all maritime countries up to this time, which exploited foreign settlements and dependencies for the benefit of the ruling power and restricted their commerce to her ports, was at last abandoned. The benefit accruing to English trade from the emancipation of South America—and this at a time when such a customer was most needed and welcome—supplied in itself a powerful argument against restriction. England could not keep her own colonies in shackles which she had helped to break from the limbs of others. The monopolizing treatment of colonial possessions had proved to be short-sighted and suicidal, in the case of Spain and Holland; Great Britain proceeded to throw the trade of her Empire open to the world, to the great contentment and advantage of the colonists, and in the end to her own still greater profit.

From this date the rapid growth of the North American colonies commenced, which largely absorbed, during the period we are discussing, the overspill of the British population. In the second quarter of the century South Africa and Australia, and a little later New Zealand, began in turn their course of development under the new régime. The increasing attraction of colonial life is evidenced by the fact that 'the annual emigration from the United Kingdom' grew from an average of 'just over twelve thousand for the years 1820-24' to 'sixty-five thousand' for the corresponding period ten years after. The greater economic stress at home in the later decade only accounts in part for this forward leap in colonization.

Methodism flourished almost everywhere in the colonies,

and overtook their rapid growth. It was sedulously and skilfully nursed in the new lands by the Mission House, as we shall see in later chapters. A whole family of daughter Conferences came to birth after the turn of the century, whose collective membership by that time exceeded that of the parent Church; their formation ran parallel to, or even anticipated, the attainment of nationhood by the Commonwealths to which they belonged. Greater Britain (including the United States) had given to Methodism a free field for her expansion, and conditions more favourable to her genius than the homeland afforded: in these nascent countries, with their ardour of youth and their incalculable resources, she was gathering the strength required for the full discharge of her world-mission in the Gospel of God.

The course of England's internal history at this epoch was eventful and critical; the train of domestic national events bore closely on the work of the Church. A profound depression followed the strain of the twenty-two years of almost unbroken war, terminating on the field of Waterloo—a war the most desperate and the most costly that England had ever known. The country lay under an unprecedented burden of debt. Trade was disorganized by the cessation of employments connected with military and naval service, and the crowds of discharged workmen and tradespeople were swelled by tens of thousands of discharged soldiers and sailors. The sudden fall of prices caused severe agricultural distress and dislocated the rural economy. Manufacturing industry continued to grow; but it found little outlet for its products in devastated Europe on the removal of the Napoleonic embargo, and had still to seek with difficulty more distant markets. The constant improvements in machinery, while trade was drooping, meant the reduction of manual labour, and the hand-loom weavers of Lancashire and Yorkshire were reduced to a miserable plight. The Luddite conspiracy of northern and mid-England, and the bread-riots and rick-burnings which for some time were epidemic in the eastern and southern counties, were symptoms of a state of suffering amongst the poor perhaps more extreme and general than our population has known before or since. The condition of the Home Funds of Methodism during these distressful years reflects the general straitness and financial embarrassment of the country. The



reactionary and incompetent Government of the day (1815-22) found no resource but in measures of repression; and the struggle between authority and sedition culminated in the notorious 'Manchester Massacre' ('The Battle of Peterloo') on August 19, 1819. The term 'Radicalism' originated in the troubles of this crisis, denoting the demand for extreme democratic changes, which then became for the first time widely audible.

During these years of domestic penury and violent unrest the Missionary Society took its rise. The fact that the foundations of the enterprise were laid in a time so stormy reveals the ardent faith and devotion of the Methodists of a hundred years ago, and the imperative sense of duty to Christ by which they were possessed. The gloomy background throws into bright relief the high resolution and detachment of mind that animated the leaders of the missionary movement, which compelled them to press forward in the sacred cause at a juncture in which their whole attention and strength might have seemed to be demanded by the threatening national situation. The temptation was surely strong to put off the missionary question to a more convenient season. Had our people done this, had they postponed the 'foreign' to what appeared the loudly competing claims of 'home' necessities, the supreme occasion would have been missed, and British Methodism would have sought to 'gain its life' only to 'lose' it through narrowness of heart and shortness of vision.

With the death of George III in 1820, followed by that of Lord Castlereagh in 1822, a notable change came over English politics. The reactionary current prevailing for the last thirty years, which was due to the excesses of the French Revolution, began to turn. George Canning, William Huskisson ('the ablest practical financier of the age'), and, less conspicuously, Sir Robert Peel, were the leading spirits of the new Government. These men had a constructive policy; they resumed William Pitt's earlier and more liberal plans, from which he had been diverted by the outbreak of the French War (in 1793) and by the stubborn conservatism of the old king. It was an unhappy fate that drew Pitt aside from his proper bent as parliamentary and economic reformer, and made of him perforce a war-minister. This was the rôle of his father, the illustrious Earl of Chatham; the son was cast in a different



mould, and by one of the ironies of history became the director of fleets and armies, and the accumulator of the National Debt. But Pitt found his heir in Canning,<sup>1</sup> whose brief tenure of power (from 1822 to 1827) gave a decisive turn to the affairs of his country, both in its domestic and foreign interests. These six years formed, in every political sense, the most pregnant epoch of the century. With Canning as her Foreign Minister, England parted company with the 'Holy Alliance' and the absolutist reaction on the Continent, and took her stand as the friend of oppressed nationalities; the new system of colonial administration was set on foot; the Navigation Laws were relaxed to an extent approaching abolition; sweeping changes in taxation and tariff were introduced, thus preparing the way for 'free trade'; the Criminal Code and judicial procedure were boldly reformed; the Combination Laws, which practically prohibited trade unions, were repealed. Had Canning lived a little longer, he would doubtless have brought slavery to an end, and would have carried Catholic emancipation. To this the King and the Duke of Wellington were compelled to assent in 1829, after the Test and Corporation Acts, which had for so long attached a stigma to Dissenters, had been removed from the Statute Book.

The period when Canning led the Commons, as compared with that immediately preceding it, seemed to contemporaries an age of gold succeeding to one of iron. . . . A new spirit of mildness and benevolence had grown up; an eagerness to reform abuses and remove evils was everywhere prevalent. From the emancipation of Catholics to the emancipation of slaves, from the abolition of obsolete duties to the abolition of the death-penalty for the pettiest crimes, from the first legislative attempts at preventing cruelty to dumb animals to the first assaults on the sacred code of the game-laws, the influence of a larger tolerance and sympathy is everywhere apparent.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In one respect Canning fell behind his great leaders. Pitt, on his entrance into the House of Commons in 1781, espoused the cause of parliamentary reform, which he never renounced. His successor was resolutely opposed to it, and ranged himself on this question with the highest of the Tories. This obstinacy shattered the Conservative party after his death; and the Liberals, coming into power on the accession of William IV in 1830, took up Canning's mantle and continued the course of ameliorative measures which he had so vigorously commenced. He believed eminently in 'government for the people,' but not in government 'by the people.' The pliancy of the unreformed Parliament of the twenties to his reforming policy gave some excuse for Canning's perverseness on this subject. He was perhaps, as other brilliant men have been, *felix opportunitate mortis*; he must have bent, as did the House of Lords, to the storm that carried into law the Reform Bill of 1832, of whose muttering he took so little heed.

<sup>2</sup> So Temperley in Vol. X. of *The Cambridge Modern History*, pp. 583-93.

While this beneficial political development took place, during the third decade of the century, the country was recovering, and Europe itself more slowly, from the crippled condition in which the war had left the nations. Recovery was, however, checked by the financial crisis of 1826, which resulted from the outburst of reckless speculation which returning prosperity had occasioned. During these brighter years in the national experience the popularity of the Missionary Society made swift advance ; its income was more than doubled between 1819 and 1829. The spirit which inspired its efforts was akin to the broader and kindlier human feeling which animated the legislature under the ascendancy of Canning. This temper was the more remarkable as it showed itself in the nation after a long period of war, which is apt to engender heartlessness and brutality. Humane legislation and missionary devotion were both fruits of the spirit of the Evangelical Revival. The leaders of Methodism in those times were reticent as to their political leanings, but, so far as one can gather, most of them inclined to the progressive Conservatism of Canning's party. Along with Huskisson and Peel, Canning represented the ideals of the manufacturing and mercantile middle classes, who were lifted to power on the rising tide of the industrial revolution, and were destined to hold a predominant influence in both the great parties of State for the next half-century or more, largely displacing the old territorial aristocracy in political leadership. On this section of society Methodism was securing a stronger hold than heretofore ; men of commercial standing and moderate affluence were becoming comparatively numerous amongst its adherents. All this goes to account for the rapid growth in the resources of the Missionary Society during the period under review, and for the readiness with which laymen, competent to assist in the guidance of the Church's foreign affairs, came forward.<sup>1</sup>

*Slavery* was the one question which involved the Missionary Society directly and actively in national politics. Our Missionaries had become the friends and pastors of thousands of negro slaves in the West Indies, and were compelled, in the name of common humanity, to be their champions. This

<sup>1</sup> The dependence of the Missionary Society on the support of the commercial class is delicately indicated by the depression of income reported in the year 1827, consequent on the financial crisis of 1826, when it fell by £2,000, to rise again by £7,000 in the year following.

created a position of extreme difficulty under the existing conditions of West Indian society. The persecutions and protests that arose, involving repeated appeals from the local magistrates and legislators to British justice at home, will be matter of detailed narration hereafter. Suffice it here to note that the scandalous conflicts thus reported from the islands, the almost habitual outrages inflicted by the planters upon devoted and inoffensive Christian Ministers for their attempts to relieve the spiritual destitution and moral degradation of the most abject of mankind, not only deepened the abhorrence of slavery natural to the British mind, but forced on thinking men, and on statesmen of every party, the conviction that the evil thing must be destroyed root and branch ; that slavery was an intolerable mischief and a festering sore in the body politic ; an institution out of date, and irreconcilable with the supremacy of the British crown and with the spirit of a free and Christian people. The abolition of slavery was the necessary sequel to the stoppage of the slave-trade in 1807. William Wilberforce, now enfeebled by age, solemnly committed to Fowell Buxton, in 1821, the cause to which he had consecrated forty years of a noble life ; in twelve years more, within a few weeks of the day on which Wilberforce breathed his last, Buxton's abolitionist motion, at length adopted by the Government of the day, had passed into law. On August 1, 1834, emancipation was proclaimed peacefully throughout the British West Indies and Guiana. The sum of £20,000,000 was paid from the National Exchequer in compensation to the dispossessed slave-owners.

Without distinction of party, Methodist speakers all over the country, along with those of other missionary churches, threw themselves into the contest ; for it was felt to be a matter that touched the heart of Christianity and the most vital interests of mankind. The country was raised to a rare pitch of enthusiasm and sacrifice, and the moral effects of the demonstration extended far beyond our own shores. The Wesleyan Missionary Society had justified its existence, if by nothing else, by the contribution it had made to this great triumph won for humanity.

The same Parliament which put an end to slavery—the first after the Reform Bill of 1832—made a beginning, on the motion of Lord Ashley (afterwards Earl of Shaftesbury), in



protective factory legislation ; it deprived the East India Company of its monopoly on the renewal of the Charter in 1833 ; it carried out the epoch-making amendment of the Poor Laws in 1834 ; and it completed (in 1835) the reform of parliamentary representation by reforming the municipal institutions of the country. In 1840 the Government of Lord Melbourne, on the report of the Earl of Durham, effected the settlement of Canadian administration, already referred to,<sup>1</sup> which marks 'the beginning of a new era in British colonial history.'

The conflict with slavery led to the first attempts of our Missionary Society upon the western coast of Africa. The colony of Sierra Leone had been founded in 1792 by the group of philanthropists associated with William Wilberforce, in order to provide a settlement for liberated slaves, and to combat the slave-trade by spreading legitimate commerce and Christian civilization amongst the negro tribes. Refugee slaves from the United States, who had been planted formerly in Nova Scotia and had there come under Methodist influence, were deported to this spot. At their appeal the first Missionary appears to have been sent by the Conference, in 1811. Sierra Leone increased in importance after the prohibition of the slave-trade in 1807, when cargoes of slaves captured on the high seas by the British cruisers began to be landed here.

In course of time the direction of the colony grew beyond the powers of a private company and was taken over by the British Government, which gradually extended its authority along the coast, where British mercantile interests assumed large proportions. The West African slave-trade was effectually suppressed after the close of the Great War. So long as it continued, the country far into the hinterland was kept in a state of disorder and rapine which forbade all progress, either in commerce or evangelism. This condition of things continued in many quarters after the cause was removed. By the middle of the century, as the region came under a more civilized order, the way was opened for missionary advance among the tribes of the nearer interior. Now that the continent has been explored from west to east, and subjected in vast stretches to European rule, while the Missionary Societies have built up large and self-supporting Churches along the coast, the time

<sup>1</sup> See p. 89.



is surely ripe for the long-desired march of Christianity into the heart of Africa, to be simultaneously made from west to east and south to north.

Our survey of the world-situation presented to the fathers of the Missionary Society brings us round, finally, to India. As the nineteenth century advanced it became increasingly felt that India holds a place of cardinal importance in the British Empire, and in the charge imposed by God upon the British Churches. The impeachment of Warren Hastings (1787-95)—the most famous state-trial of the last two hundred years in England—though it ended in acquittal, awakened the conscience of the nation to its responsibility for India, and helped to put a new *morale* into our administration there. A succession of high-principled and able statesmen—Lord Cornwallis, Sir John Shore (Lord Teignmouth), the Marquis of Wellesley (brother to the Duke of Wellington), Lord Minto—held the reins of vice-regal power from the years 1785 to 1813. During this period, while England was fighting for her life and Europe was in political revulsion, the foundations of the British *raj* in Hindustan were being steadily widened and deepened. Cornwallis regulated the internal administration of the country, purified the Civil Service, and set the Judicature on a proper footing. Wellesley, by brilliant diplomacy and military action, brought the dangerous outlying Native Powers under control, and made the Company effectively dominant through the peninsula.

There was another Indian administrator, who, though he never reached the highest offices of State, did more probably to shape the course of British-Indian affairs through these formative years than any of those we have named. *Charles Grant*, the friend of Carey and of Wilberforce and correspondent of Thomas Coke, and one of the fathers of the British and Foreign Bible Society, entered the service of the East India Company as a young man in 1773. He rose to high distinction in the Bengal Service, and on returning home was made Director, and finally Chairman of the Board of Directors in Leadenhall Street. Grant was a man of deep evangelical faith, and of rare force of mind and practical ability. He acquired, 'in virtue of his noble character and wide Indian experience,' an influence upon English sentiment and policy toward the great Dependency, as salutary as it was powerful. So great

was Grant's authority in the Directorate of the Company, and in the discussion of Eastern subjects in Parliament, that he has been called 'the ruler of the rulers of India!' Chiefly at his instance, while the proposal to abolish the monopoly of the trade which the Company enjoyed was rejected by Parliament,<sup>1</sup> the barrier against the importation of Christianity was at last removed, and the masters of India permitted their own religion to be preached freely to their subjects. This provision, which William Pitt (instigated by Wilberforce) had unsuccessfully introduced into his *India Bill* of 1783, at length opened the door of the Indian Empire to the Church of Christ. Castlereagh's *India Bill*, in effect, fixed the date of the birth of the Wesleyan Missionary Society. For this act of legislation set Dr. Coke upon the mission to the East, which he had projected thirty years before in the hope of the sanction then withheld, and Coke's departure on that errand led to the founding of the Society by Jabez Bunting and his coadjutors. They sought to fill the gap created by the missionary founder's removal, and to provide the sinews of war for the great campaign to which Methodism was committed by sanctioning his expedition.

The last paragraphs—on the Indian situation—do not fall strictly within the heading of this chapter, but it was necessary to go a little farther back into the antecedent conditions in order to explain the position in which the missionary leaders found themselves towards the State in India, when the operations of our Society first began in that quarter. *Permission* was now secured; but no encouragement was given to missionary work—seldom was it countenanced by local administrators. In course of time Government came into a sort of partnership with the Missionary Societies in the work of education. Lord William Bentinck (1828–35) was the first Governor-General to interfere with Hindu religious practices, as he did by the prohibition of *suttee*, or widow-burning. This was proscribed on humanitarian, not on expressly religious, grounds; but it was the beginning of the collision, which British rulers in vain sought to escape, between radically conflicting systems of human life and social order.

<sup>1</sup> It was carried easily at the *next* renewal (1833) in the Reformed House of Commons.

## IV

### THE MISSION HOUSE

The Missionary Society and the Book-Room—First Efforts to Secure a Mission House—Hatton Garden—The Centenary Hall of 1841—The Rebuilding of the Hall—The Warehouse in Carlisle Avenue—A Great Home Organization Dépôt.

THE limbs of the Missionary Society stretch over the earth ; the central organs, directing and unifying its operations, are in the Mission House in London—that vast focus of human activity where, more than at any other spot, the threads which bind the world's life together cross and converge. While Dr. Coke lived no Mission House was needed. For the first thirty years he was the factotum of Methodist Missions, Home and Foreign—Secretary, Treasurer, Collector, General Manager in one. He carried their affairs about with him, and frequently met their financial deficit out of his private purse. The Book-Steward, stationary in London, received moneys on Coke's behalf, and kept a running account with the Missionaries for the supply of literature. In this way the finance of the Missions became entangled with that of the Book-Room. This entanglement, along with the increasing complication of missionary affairs and the uncertainty of Dr. Coke's movements, added to his independent and perhaps eccentric ways of doing business, compelled the interposition of Conference. First in 1795, then more definitely and authoritatively in 1804, a Committee was appointed to assist the General Superintendent of Missions ; but its limited transactions hardly required separate business premises ; the vestry of City Road Chapel might serve the turn.

When, however, the Wesleyan Missions became ' a public cause ' on Dr. Coke's removal (1813-14), and the ' Missionary Society,' with its rapidly increasing funds and multiplying agents, was established, the necessity for a local habitation soon arose. Two Secretaries, chosen along with the Treasurer

from amongst the London Ministers, had been appointed in 1814 ; in the next year the Conference added a Lay Treasurer to the staff—the first Connexional appointment of the kind. These successive steps indicate the growing magnitude of the missionary work and the increasing extent and responsibility of its affairs. Its Committee, which consisted up to this date, apart from the officers named, of London Ministers alone, appears to have held its monthly meetings at the Book-Room, often continuously with the meetings of the managing Committee of that department. The Conference of 1816 approved the employment of a permanent clerk to assist the officers of the Society and the securing of a separate business office. Measures were taken accordingly ; and in September, 1816, Jabez Bunting writes :

Yesterday we agreed to take for one year two rooms on the first floor of Mr. Bruce's house<sup>1</sup> (4 City Road) for our missionary office. We are to pay £24 per annum. A clerk is engaged, who is to assist the secretaries for five hours every day for 15s.

Such were the modest beginnings of the Mission House establishment.

This tiny office proved insufficient from the outset. Space was required not merely for the clerical business of the Society and the reception of visitors, but for the storing of baggage, and of goods which it was found necessary to keep in stock in order to supply the various wants of the Missionaries outgoing or upon the field. Accordingly the Conference of 1817 gave order

that suitable premises for a Mission House and office shall be immediately secured in some central situation in London, affording sufficient accommodation for the transaction of all our missionary business, and for a dépôt of proper articles which are wanted for the outfit of Missionaries ; and that for the further assistance of the Treasurers and Secretaries a competent clerk shall be appointed and steadily employed in order that there may be a regular system of book-keeping in respect to all our missionary receipts and expenditure.

The fathers were resolved to have all things done decently and in order !

In pursuance of the above resolution, a house of considerable

<sup>1</sup> This gentleman was a leading London Methodist. Dr. Coke appears earlier to have had the use of his office when transacting business in London.



size was rented, and subsequently purchased, situated in *Hatton Garden*, near the Farringdon Road—No. 77. This building, which stands to-day little altered in appearance, remained the home of the Society for twenty-three years. Hatton Garden formed at that time a somewhat retired street of large and fashionable houses sufficiently near to the city for men of business. It has long since lost its residential character, and is now the resort of dealers in bullion and precious stones. Sir Christopher Hatton, whose name attaches to the neighbourhood in various ways, was Queen Elizabeth's Lord Chancellor; here stood his suburban mansion, with the 'Garden' at its back. John Evelyn describes in his *Diary* (for June 7, 1659) the laying out of the street which took this appellation. On the occupation of the new premises by the Missionary Society, the large front room on the ground floor was appropriated for Committee meetings. Other front rooms were assigned to the clerks and copyists; the Secretaries' offices were located at the back of the house; the Resident Secretary found his domestic quarters in the upper story. A warehouse for goods was erected in the garden behind.

Joseph Taylor lived in the Mission House from 1818 to 1824. He was followed in residence by George Morley (1824-30). But by the end of Morley's term the business of the house had so much increased that all the rooms of No. 77 were required for office and storage purposes, and an adjoining dwelling in Hatton Garden was rented for the abode of the Secretary. Thomas Edwards, Secretary in 1830-31, lived at No. 62, which was in occupation by his successors for twenty years at least after this date.

The Secretary's house supplied a hostel for newly appointed Missionaries awaiting their departure, who sometimes remained under his care through many weeks, and for candidates brought up to London for examination. A large residence was therefore necessary, entailing much domestic labour on the Secretary's household. As the number of separated Secretaries increased from one to two, and from two to three, these duties of hospitality and oversight were shared amongst the officers. Until, and even after, the establishment of the Theological Institution in 1837, it continued to be an important part of the secretarial functions to look after the missionary recruits and to give them so much as was possible, in the short time available,

of drill and instruction before sending them abroad. This arrangement had the advantage of making the staff at home intimately acquainted with the agents on the field, and of forming personal ties between the administration at home and the Missionaries abroad which were often very precious and of practical value. Dr. Beecham and Dr. Hoole, in the middle period of the Society's history, were particularly happy in the influence which they thus acquired.

Long before they were vacated the Hatton Garden premises had become inconveniently strait. Thomas Hayes, whose *Recollections*<sup>1</sup> went back to this distant period, says that the old Mission House was filled up

to the last cupboard ; it was with difficulty sometimes that we could make our way through the passage to the back of the house, so crowded was it with Missionaries' luggage, homeward or outward bound.

The Missionary Committee were compelled to seek larger quarters.

The Centenary year of the establishment of Methodism (1739) was now approaching. By way of thanksgiving and celebration it was designed to raise a large Church Fund ; and amongst the objects to which this fund should be devoted, the erection of a monumental ' Centenary Hall ' for the housing of the Missionary Society was set in the forefront. ' The City of London Tavern,'<sup>2</sup> a spacious and fashionable house of entertainment situated at the bottom of Bishopsgate Street on the east side, happened just then to come into the market. This property was purchased for £15,000—the site is worth at the present date many times that amount. The old fabric was not demolished ; its front part, containing the saloon and committee-room, remained substantially unaltered, while the back of the old inn, which narrowed to half the width of the frontage, was entirely rebuilt. The outlay upon adaptation and reconstruction doubled the original cost of purchase. This

<sup>1</sup> *Recollections of Sixty-three years of Methodist Life*, published in 1902 by Thomas Hayes, who served in the office from 1837 to 1882, earning universal esteem. For many years after his retirement from the Mission House Mr. Hayes had charge of the Allan Library. This veteran servant of Methodism died, full of days, in 1911.

<sup>2</sup> This house must be distinguished from the more famous 'London Tavern,' which stood upon the opposite side of the way. The latter hotel, which had very ample public rooms, served as a rendezvous for philanthropic assemblies in the metropolis. Here, on March 7, 1804, the meeting was held which gave birth to the British and Foreign Bible Society.

conversion of a tavern into a Mission House did not supply an ideal building for the uses intended, but it was skilfully planned and well executed. The Centenary Hall became an object of modest pride and affection to our Methodist grandfathers, and served its purpose well for the next generation. Compared with narrow and stuffy 77 Hatton Garden, the new Mission House, at 17 Bishopsgate Street Within was a palace ! The opening of the Centenary Hall took place in January, 1841, and was a Methodist festival, attended by visitors from many parts of the country. Dr. Bunting, Dr. Newton, and the venerable Richard Reece, who had watched over the Missionary Society from its birth, were the preachers of the occasion. Hatton Garden had afforded little more than a business office and dépôt ; now the Methodist Church possessed a visible and adequate, if not commanding, centre for its world-wide operations, a meeting-place and house of welcome for its sons from every land.

The Centenary Hall supplied the place of a Methodist Church House. It afforded the rallying-ground for metropolitan and Connexional gatherings of multifarious kinds. Most of the departments of Methodism have enjoyed the hospitality of its committee-rooms, which have been the scene of momentous debates and critical decisions. For purposes of ecclesiastical business and consultation, this spot more than any other furnished for seventy years the headquarters of British Methodism, while it has been the focus of the activities of Methodism overseas. From this centre hundreds of Missionaries have set out upon the world-errands of the Gospel ; hither their thoughts have wistfully turned from far-off lands amongst the heathen ; their feet have sought its threshold first on coming home. What a tide of consecrated life has poured through those gateways ; of what hopes and fears, ardours, loyalties, confidences, protests and entreaties, that house has been the mark !

The Centenary Hall of 1841 for half a century served its two-fold purpose fairly well. But the times altered, and the premises came to be out of date. Adapted to its present use and not designed for it, the building was architecturally defective, and the valuable ground on which it stood was imperfectly utilized. The large assembly-room, filling the chief space on the first floor, was no longer in demand as



formerly, since other convenient and accessible Methodist halls had been built in the metropolis. The basement and cellarage of the Hall served for warehousing and storage purposes, but in a very inconvenient and inadequate way. It was a poor economy to occupy for this object space of such value in the business centre of the City, when a warehouse might be secured in a more suitable situation and on less expensive ground. Some thought it advisable to dispose of the old site and secure less costly ground in a favourable position, where a modern building could be erected large enough to house other Church departments which required a lodging along with the Missionary Society. It was felt, however, that the spot on which the existing house stood, commemorating the origin of Methodism, had become holy ground ; to abandon it would be a breach with the past. Plans were drawn showing the possibility of providing within the given space for all the Connexional offices seeking accommodation. It was deemed advisable, therefore, to build a new and more capacious edifice. The Conference of 1897 adopted this proposal. But before the scheme could be put in execution the Twentieth Century Fund was originated by the Conference of 1898, accompanied by the project of a Methodist Church House, which has been realized in the monumental edifice erected at Westminster. This prospect relieved the Missionary Committee of the necessity of finding room for other Church departments in its house ; and it was made possible to set aside not only the ground floor and part of the basement to be let for rent-earning purposes, as originally designed, but the first floor of the new building also, the three upper floors (to be reached by a lift) sufficing for the needs of the Missionary Society. This modified plan has been carried out ; the lower half of the present building, entered by a separate door, has been let to a bank, on a rental which by the end of that period will recoup the cost of construction, together with the interest on the borrowed money. The reopening took place in 1903. Since this date the great street in which the Mission House stands has been renamed and numbered, so that 17 Bishopsgate Street Within is now known as 24 *Bishopsgate*.

The following description is based upon the account of the new Mission House given in the *Foreign Field*, Vol. II. (1905-6), pp. 281-287, by the Rev. Marshall Hartley.



The northern entrance from Bishopsgate leads to the offices of the tenants. Entering by the southern door, we find ourselves confronted by a broad stairway and a lift, offering alternative means of ascent. Behind the lift is a staircase leading down to the reserved portion of the basement at the rear of the building. Here are the Society's strong-rooms, containing the safes in which legal documents are preserved, along with books and manuscripts of unique historical importance. Store-rooms and the furnace for heating the upper stories fill up the remaining basement area. At the foot of the stairs leading up from the first floor stand iron gates, which admit to the Mission House above during business hours. Climbing two flights of steps to the second floor, one passes through oaken swing-doors into a lofty entrance hall. The floor and lining of its walls are marble ; but the special feature of this handsome apartment is the richly wrought bronze frieze running round it, which bears four missionary legends from Scripture engraved in gilt, to meet the visitor's eye as he enters. On the walls is fixed an inscribed tablet commemorating the founding of the Hall in 1839, and its reconstruction in the year 1903.

Turning sharply to the left from the entrance hall, we pass into the Centenary Room, which covers nearly the whole front of the second floor and is one of the finest chambers of its kind in the city of London. This room is much in request for religious gatherings outside of our own Church, and is readily lent by the Trustees, when vacant, to friendly people. Right and left of the fireplace, on the walls of the Centenary Room hang two famous historical pictures—'The Rescue of John Wesley from the Burning Parsonage at Epworth' and 'The Death-bed of John Wesley.' Round the apartment we find an array of Methodist portraits, and recognize the faces of the Wesleys—the mother and two sons—Thomas Coke, Richard Watson, Francis Asbury, Jabez and William M. Bunting, Elijah Hoole, Matthew Simpson (of America), Thomas Farmer, Samuel D. Waddy, and other men of renown.

At the side of the large room, with doors opening both into it and into the entrance hall, is a smaller room used for sub-committees and consultations, which has the advantage of greater quiet and seclusion. Opposite to the committee-rooms, on the east side of the entrance hall, a corridor runs to the back of the premises. Along this passage we pass, first, the Inquiry

and telephone office to the right and the waiting-room to the left ; beyond these we come to the clerks' office, and adjoining them the office of one of the General Secretaries. At the end of the corridor is the Treasurer's room and library, a handsome and spacious apartment occupying the width of the building at the rear.

Mounting again by the stairs or the lift, we find ourselves on the third floor, which has a central square hall of the area of the entrance hall below. On the west of this hall is a suite of offices occupied by two of the Secretaries and their assistants, on either side of a short passage. From the opposite side of the square hall a longer corridor opens, corresponding to that on the second floor, which conducts to the Missionaries' waiting-room, to the typewriters' room, with several other smaller offices. The fourth Secretary has a convenient room at the end of this corridor. The rooms on the fourth floor will be in demand for official purposes as the business grows.

Now that the Society has a house strictly and altogether its own, new interest will gather round it and fresh uses will be found for its rooms and spaces. Even more than in the past, it will be the resort of the children of Methodism beyond the seas, a heart throbbing with affections, a workshop resounding with operations that cover the whole field of the Church at home and girdle the habitable globe.

During the demolition and reconstruction of its house, the Missionary Society occupied the premises at No. 1 Coleman Street, E.C., where the business of Messrs. Vanner, the well-known Methodist City firm, had been carried on for many years. At the same time (in 1901) a lease was taken of No. 7 in Carlisle Avenue, Jewry Street, E.C., to provide for the warehousing business of the Society. This segregation has become permanent ; it has relieved the congestion formerly prevailing at the Centenary Hall, and set free a large part of the very valuable space furnished on the Bishopsgate site for more remunerative occupation.

But the new warehouse has been appropriated to other purposes than to those of a *dépôt* for Missionaries' luggage and Mission stores. Here space has been found for the building-up of the Home Organization Department. In Carlisle Avenue the Society now has its own publishing house, keeping in

stock missionary literature and organizing its dissemination. Eighty-five thousand copies of the *Foreign Field*<sup>1</sup> are dispatched in monthly parcels to 1,700 voluntary local distributors, who convey them to subscribers in their own neighbourhoods. *At Home and Abroad*, the half-penny monthly for children, circulates to the number of 44,000 copies. The *Annual Report* of the Society—an elaborate and skilfully prepared review of its operations—has a yearly issue of about 15,000.

Other modern appliances of instruction find quarters here. A stock of photographic films and negatives, coming from every corner of the world and representing almost every phase and situation of missionary life, is being accumulated, the whole collection carefully classified and arranged, so that any item in demand may be at once forthcoming. Much of the material has been utilized for the *Foreign Field*, which keeps up by this means a wonderfully profuse supply of illustration. Chiefly from this store, to which the many Missionaries and Methodist travellers who handle the camera are constant contributors, sets of magic-lantern slides are produced, which the H.O.D. is ready to furnish in great variety to lecturers all over the country who apply for its help. Another room is devoted to native costumes, which have been brought together from the countries where our Missionaries labour, and are lent out in suitable combinations to aid in representing the missionary scenes and tableaux which serve to interest and inform children and young people, picturing to them the look and living form of the things they hear about in stories of foreign lands. To the same order of instruction, upon a large scale, belong the missionary exhibitions that have become so popular of recent years. The Society now possesses an extensive plant and material for this purpose.

<sup>1</sup> The *Foreign Field*, at the price of 1d., has replaced the old *Missionary Notices* commenced in the year 1817, consisting chiefly of letters from the field, which was sent gratuitously to the Society's subscribers, and *Work and Workers*, a 3d. periodical which had supplied for a number of years, under the editorship of Secretary F. W. Macdonald, information and discussion of a more substantial nature.

## APPENDIX

Limitations of space preclude anything more than a mere list of names in considering those who have served as officers of the Society. But a study of these shows the place which missionary service has always held among the many organizations of the Methodist Church. In this list are to be found the names of the most prominent Ministers of that Church for a hundred years. Ecclesiastical statesmen of the first order, able administrators, learned scholars, and eloquent preachers, men of liberal mind, catholic spirit, and world-wide vision, all these appear in our list. The Church has given her greatest Ministers to this work, and not a few of them have presided over her councils. All these have served, with a loyalty that deepened into passion, the furtherance of the kingdom of God in the world of men. By their wise service they have established and developed the Society on lines which to-day promise an even greater harvest than has yet been secured.

The list of the laymen who have filled the office of Treasurer is a short one. Tenure of office in this department has happily been of longer duration. But short as the list is, it contains the names of those whom the Church will continue to keep in reverent and grateful memory, while it glorifies the grace of God in them.

## SECRETARIES

1814-15	Jonathan Edmondson
1815-16	James Buckley
1815-16	Thomas Wood
1816-18	George Marsden
1816-26	Richard Watson
1818-20	Jabez Bunting, D.D.
1818-24	Joseph Taylor
1820-21	John Burdsall
1821-24	Jabez Bunting, D.D.
	(Second term)
1824-30	George Morley
1824-27	John Mason



## THE MISSION HOUSE

1826-27	Robert Newstead
1827-32	James Townley, D.D.
1827-33	John James
1830-31	Thomas Edwards
1831-50	John Beecham, D.D.
1832-33	Richard Watson (Second term)
1833-51	Robert Alder
1833-51	Jabez Bunting, D.D. (Third term)
1834-72	Elijah Hoole, D.D.
1851-56	John Beecham, D.D. (Second term)
1851-68	George Osborn, D.D.
1851-68	William Arthur, M.A.
1861-76	William B. Boyce
1867-77	George T. Perks, M.A.
1868-75	Luke H. Wiseman, M.A.
1875-81	W. Morley Punshon, LL.D.
1876-88	John Kilner
1877-88	Ebenezer E. Jenkins, M.A.
1877-91	Marmaduke C. Osborn
1881-1900	George W. Olver, B.A.
1888-91	John Walton, M.A.
1888-1919	Marshall Hartley
1891-1905	Frederic W. Macdonald
1896-98	William T. A. Barber, M.A., D.D.
1898-1914	William Perkins
1900-10	William H. Findlay, M.A.
1905-12	John M. Brown
1912-17	Henry Haigh, D.D.
1913	Charles W. Andrews, B.A., B.D.
1914	William Goudie
1919	Amos Burnet
1919	Edgar W. Thompson, M.A.

## TREASURERS

## CLERICAL

1814	James Wood
1818	George Marsden

1821	George Morley
1824	Joseph Taylor
1830	George Marsden
1833	Joseph Taylor
1836	John Scott
1868	F. J. Jobson, D.D.
1881	James H. Rigg, D.D.
1909-12	Henry J. Pope, D.D.
(Clerical Treasurership discontinued 1912)	

## LAY

1815	Thomas Thompson, M.P.
1819	Joseph Butterworth, M.P.
1826	Lancelot Haslope
1836	Thomas Farmer
1861	James Heald, M.P.
1874	James S. Budgett
1883	Sir William M'Arthur, K.C.M.G., M.P.
1888	Thomas M. Harvey
1898	Williamson Lamplough
<sup>1</sup> 1912-20	James Vanner Early

<sup>1</sup>When the Clerical Treasurership was discontinued in 1912, J. V. Early was appointed as Junior Treasurer to Williamson Lamplough, an office he held until his death in 1920.

## V

### THE MISSIONARY JUBILEE

The Jubilee of 1863—The Growth of Missions in Fifty Years—Review of the Several Fields—Colonial Methodism—Work among non-Christian Peoples—Celebration of the Jubilee—The Jubilee in Mission Districts—Objects to which the Jubilee Fund was devoted.

THE 'Jubilee' of the Jewish calendar was the joyous festival attending the release of Hebrew slaves and the restoration of alienated lands with which the Law marked the close of each sacred period of fifty years. Christian usage describes under this religious term the commemoration of any happy event which has reached its fiftieth anniversary. In 1863 the Missionary Society therefore made its jubilation. It was half through the hundred years' march we review to-day. Here it took occasion to trace the path along which it had been led by the Guiding Hand, and to raise its Ebenezer in the form of a grateful offering to God to be used in the consolidating of the work accomplished upon the foreign field. It will be well for us to pause at this point in order to measure the progress thus far made by Methodism in its world work, to estimate the tasks achieved by the Missionary Society up to this date, the responsibilities it had incurred, and the prospects then opening before it.

When the Society was founded in 1813 to take over the charge of Dr. Thomas Coke, forty-two Methodist Missionaries were at work on foreign Stations—at Gibraltar, in British North America, and the West Indies, two-thirds of them being engaged in the field last named. Sierra Leone had been occupied two years earlier, but that post was again vacant. Dr. Coke had just been commissioned, with six companions, for India and the East, and the party sailed at the close of the year 1813.

In connexion with this movement, the first Missionary was designated for Cape Town in South Africa. No Mission as yet had been commenced upon strictly heathen territory. The bulk of the flock hitherto gathered into Christ's fold overseas

were found in the West Indies, where 15,220 members were enrolled in the Methodist Societies. In Nova Scotia and Newfoundland together the membership stood at the tenth of the above figure. At Gibraltar and in Sierra Leone there were Societies of 87 and 96 members respectively. France was credited with 100; but these were British prisoners-of-war in durance at Besançon; for the Great War was still raging, and Napoleon still dominated Europe. The 'total number in the Methodist Societies throughout the world, was reckoned at nearly 424,000. Of these more than half belonged to the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States of America. At this time the Wesleyan Methodists of the United Kingdom numbered, all told, a little over 190,000. The constituency of our Mission Churches abroad in 1813 fell slightly short of 17,000, being almost wholly confined to the American continent and islands.

By the Jubilee year the Foreign Missions had extended to each of the five continents of the globe, and to the Polynesian shores. They had reached all the accessible islands of the West Indies, and had overflowed to British Guiana, on the mainland of South America, where eight English Missionaries, aided by two (coloured) Assistant Missionaries, were then labouring in the 'Demerara District.' The Honduras District, in Central America, an offshoot from Jamaica, was manned by five Missionaries. There were about eighty Ministers employed in the West Indian Districts (five in number), a considerable proportion of whom were born in the island. Some of these were European in descent, but many were of darker colour. The membership of the Society in this area, consisting mainly of freed negroes, to whose emancipation our Church had largely contributed, was nearly 47,000. Nowhere else in Methodism was the proportion of members to Ministers so large.

In BRITISH NORTH AMERICA the 1,500 of fifty years ago had multiplied into a Church of 17,000, with its 130 Ministers, under the direction of the Eastern Conference. West of this stretched the domain of the Conference of CANADA, already representing a Church membership of more than 58,000, served by 350 Ministers, whose Stations extended to Vancouver's Island, on the Pacific Coast, and far north into the Hudson's Bay Territory—a vast field, where the foundations of a mighty nation undreamed of in 1813 were being laid.



IN WESTERN AFRICA, where at the beginning of the Society's work there were no Missionaries, there were now three Districts extended along the coast, with intervals, from the River Gambia to Lagos, reaching in places a hundred miles or more into the hinterland. These were manned by 25 Missionaries (English and Native), shepherding a flock of nearly 10,000 Church members, with 6,800 scholars under their instruction. The negro race, on its Native shores as across the Atlantic, proved peculiarly susceptible to Methodist influence, and ready to adopt Methodist institutions. Here the servants of Christ had to struggle not only with gloomy and powerful superstitions and with continuous war, but with an enervating and deadly climate, by which their ranks were incessantly depleted. The coast is lined with missionary graves.

The development of the Society's Missions in SOUTH AFRICA, where colonial and Native work advanced *pari passu*, had been even more remarkable than on the West Coast. Most of the populated area up to and beyond the Orange River in the west and centre of the continent, and extending to Natal in the north-east, had been effectively reached by one or other of the Missionary Societies. About 70 Methodist Missionaries were at work in the five South African Districts; 8,000 people (English, Dutch, and Native) were enrolled in the Church, and Schools and Colleges which were laying secure foundations for the future had been established. In the midst of the fierceness, cruelty, and waste of war bonds of peace were forged and the shattered fabric of Society patiently rebuilt. Our Missionary Churches in these colonies and beyond them were for the most part solidly based and well disciplined. Of all this in the year 1813 the only foretaste was the appointment, not yet carried into effect, of a single Missionary to Cape Town.

For the EAST INDIES (including *Java* in the original scheme) Dr. Coke had large designs, the attempting of which cost his own life and led to a crisis resulting in the formation of the Missionary Society and the pledging of the Methodist Church to the evangelization of the heathen. First Ceylon, then India, had been entered by Coke's Missionaries, and the support of these formed a principal charge on the funds of the infant Society. The work of these fields proved far more costly and taxing than had been anticipated, and severely tested through

the half century the faith and perseverance of the Church at home. The test was patiently, if not triumphantly, endured ; priceless experience was gained ; and a trained and seasoned missionary staff, headed by such men as Spence Hardy, Kilner, and Hodson, was being formed ; a matured missionary policy was now in operation. The Mutiny of 1857 had not disturbed our Missions in South India ; but it served to draw England closer to her Eastern sister, forcing on the conscience of the British people and Government their responsibility for their Eastern possession, and deepening amongst Christian people the sense of duty toward this populous heathen field and the sense of India's importance in the life of the world.

In Ceylon (south and north) the Society at the date of the Jubilee had only 11 English Missionaries at work, where originally it planted 6. These were assisted by 17 Native Ministers, all but one of the latter belonging to the Southern (Cingalese) District. Our entire Church membership in the island was 2,100, which furnished a nucleus for future growth, but scarcely more. The Mission Schools of Ceylon were comparatively well developed, and warranted the hope of better days coming. Four thousand, three hundred and fifty scholars were under training ; of these more than a fourth were girls.

In South India the two Districts of Madras and the Mysore, with their 28 English Missionaries and 10 East Indian or Native Ministers, showed as yet but 500 members in the Church. Calcutta had been lately reoccupied by two Missionaries and a Military Chaplain (at Barrackpur) ; the abandoned attempt of 1829-32 was at length resumed. In North-west India a beginning had been made of the English Army work.

Methodism had come late into the enormous field of CHINA, having taken George Piercy into its service at Canton in the year 1852. Four stations in the Canton District were held by 7 Missionaries in 1863, and Josiah Cox was laying foundations at Hankow, on the Yang-tse River, situated at the heart of the Chinese Empire. At the date of the Jubilee the Church was witnessing in China the planting of the kingdom of heaven after the manner of the 'mustard-seed, which indeed is less than all seeds ; but when it is grown, is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree.'

A new world had risen upon the British horizon since 1813 in the farthest south and east. AUSTRALIA first appeared on

the Stations of the Methodist Conference in 1814, when Samuel Leigh was appointed to New South Wales—a region now beginning to attract colonists. For a considerable time Methodist work made slow progress on the Australian mainland, succeeding better with the Maori of New Zealand and the Tongans of the Friendly Islands. But during the later decades prosperity had come to every part of the Missions in these distant seas. There was by that time an 'Australian Conference,' including Tasmania and New Zealand, together with the mainland, and composed of 200 Ministers in charge of more than 45,000 members of Society, who were distributed in 16 Districts. Three of the Districts consisted of the 'South Sea Missions'—in the Friendly Islands, Samoa, and Fiji—which Australian Methodism had taken in charge, entering thus into a rich inheritance and a sacred trust. The Christianization of the Friendly Islands was practically effected,<sup>1</sup> and that of the Fijians far advanced, for in these islands the spell of heathenism and its political power had been broken by the year 1863.

In EUROPE the work of English Methodism yielded least visible fruit. A single Missionary was posted at Gibraltar, as was the case fifty years before. The English Chaplain had a Spanish colleague, who assisted him in evangelizing the Native population at the Rock ; but Romanism frustrated all attempts to reach the Spaniards outside of British territory. Malta, Zante, Alexandria, had been occupied with a view to penetrating the world of the Greek Church and of Islam by way of the Levant ; these positions had been in turn abandoned as unfruitful ground. Before long, however, Malta was to become an important centre of Methodism in the British Army and Navy. In the German state of Würtemberg the seed sown by the single devoted layman, converted to God under Methodist preaching in London, had borne a gracious harvest. At this date a sifted Church of nearly 1,000 Methodists was found, dispersed in four Circuits in the neighbourhood of Winnenden, which supplied a basis for the labours of 3 English and 6 German Ministers and Missionaries. In Stockholm (Sweden) the powerful ministry of George Scott (1830-43) had been terminated through persecution, but its fruit could not be

<sup>1</sup> In 1863 King George of Tonga and his Government issued one of the ablest and most remarkable legal codes ever given to a people emerging into civilization. It is published as an appendix to the *Missionary Report* for 1863.



destroyed. Swedish Lutheranism to-day owes its debt to this noble man of God. Our little scattered Church in France, with its 24 Ministers and 1,745 members, since the year 1852 had been a national and self-governing body. France thus possessed the earliest of the Affiliated Conferences. The Missionary Society stationed a Minister in Paris, where he preached to English residents and visitors, and cast his net in the restless waters where so many currents of human life mingle and clash together.

The Italian Mission was the latest-born offspring of the Society, and the object in the Jubilee year of special popular interest and solicitude. In 1861 our Church established itself in this classic land so soon as the door was opened by the national liberation, and the two English Missionaries posted at Milan and Naples, with their Italian Assistant, were making a beginning that excited the most sanguine hopes.

We have gone the round of the continents, glancing at the various regions into which Methodist labourers had been thrust forth by the Lord of the harvest, who gives the word to His reapers to go forth to this nation or to that. In some fields they have found ripe crops awaiting them, and have plied the sickle freely ; in others their task has been to ' plough in hope ' and ' sow in hope,' with little immediate fruit to gather. Here and there the ground has proved impracticable, or they have been driven off by insurmountable hostility ; but, viewing all that God had wrought through their agency in the short space of fifty years, Methodism might well rejoice before Him and take new courage for the vaster work awaiting her in the oncoming years. Nearly 200,000 names were found in 1863 enrolled in her register of Church membership, gathered on the fields where her Missionaries had laboured since 1813—a number amounting to half the census of Wesleyan Methodism in the mother-land. More than a third of these remained at the Jubilee date under the oversight of the Missionary Society, while the majority had been drafted off to the daughter Conferences. The expansion of Methodism in the Greater Britain of the colonies and the United States, witnessed in 1863, surpassed the triumphs of grace celebrated by the Centenary of the parent Church in 1839. This multitude of Christ's sheep was shepherded by 1,200 Ministers and Missionaries, ' and in all the world,' through their influence, ' the word of truth



was bearing fruit and growing.' So much of increase God had given to the slender Mission staff employed in the year when the Society was launched, and to the scanty and struggling Churches then existing.

With good right did the Church make jubilation and set up its monument of praise over a work of God so great and far-spread. Again and again for Jubilee missionary sermons the text of Jacob's thanksgiving was chosen: 'With my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands!' In 'the wonders wrought already' Christ's servants were warranted in seeing an earnest of the day foretold before Christ's coming when the 'knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth.' Negroes in multitudes—West Indian, South American, and African, Namaquas, Fingoes, and Kaffirs of many tribes; Tongans, Fijians, and Maori; Cingalese, Tamils, and Kanarese from the Far East, with a handful of Chinese, the advance guard of a mighty host—all these, joining the array of our own kindred from the daughter lands of America, Australia, and South Africa, were pressing into the kingdom of God through the doors opened by the hands of Methodist Missionaries.

We leave out of this account the Methodism of the United States, with its two Episcopal sections (north and south) and its manifold lesser branches, its Church membership numbered by the million, and its vigorous Foreign Missions; for these great American members of the Body of Christ, though they owed their birth and infant nurture to British Methodism, had assumed a separate existence before the creation of the Missionary Society at home.

Let us gather up the whole results of the fifty years of foreign evangelism realized by our Church in its Jubilee of 1863.

(1) *Colonial Methodism* is the most conspicuous fruit of Wesleyan Missions during the half-century. In North America and Australasia the new Churches thus raised up are firmly set upon their feet and prepared to go their way, independently of British control, and, before long, of British support. The Affiliated Conferences, in both cases, have relieved the mother Church of large missionary responsibilities, and are entering into her labours amongst the North American Indians and the South Sea Islanders respectively. South African Methodism is far from prepared at this date to set up

house for herself. She has not reached the stature of her sisters on the other continents, for British settlement is far less advanced here than in North America and Australia. Moreover, the Native question, complicated with the feud between the Dutch and English, looms dangerously on the South African horizon, and is destined to make both the political and ecclesiastical management and upbuilding of the country peculiarly difficult. The heathenism of the tribes of this sub-continent, their overwhelming numbers, ubiquitous presence, and warlike savagery, create problems of government and of morals, of social life and industry, bound up with those of religion, that must for long weigh heavily upon colonial life. But Methodism is already taking a foremost part in the Christianizing of this as of other dominions of Britain overseas ; in twenty years the South African Methodist Church in its turn will be ripe for self-government.

While eschewing all political aims and methods, our Church had shown itself one of the chief bonds of unity and of the factors making for loyalty throughout the British Empire. In British North America its connexional spirit, and the communion it has fostered between the scattered provinces and with the mother country, have conspicuously tended toward the growth of federal sympathies and patriotic sentiment.

(2) From the fields of *Barbarian heathenism* a great harvest has been won within the first fifty years. South Africa presents at this stage the chief example of a mixed colonial and heathen missionary field ; New Zealand resembles it upon a smaller scale. A *modus vivendi* has been established between European and Native Christianity upon these two fields, which, if not ideal, provides for intercommunion and enlists the religious colonists in the salvation of the people of the soil, making for the construction of a Christian society and nation out of the mingled elements. In North America the aborigines have come under Christian care, but they form a comparatively small constituent of the population.

The West Indies are colonial also, but in these tropical islands Europeans are not likely to be more than a ruling caste, and Methodism is preponderantly the Church of the negro. By the time of the Jubilee it had been at work for a century in this great archipelago, striving for the spiritual

redemption of the slaves, who had remained until after the middle of the eighteenth century practically heathen, and were degraded by their serfdom below the level of their African forefathers. The Emancipation of 1833-37 was an incident in the long-continued toil of the Church for the uplifting of the negro. This crisis had been prepared for, and was safely tided over, through missionary teaching and influence. But the views engendered by slavery, and engrafted upon the old stock of heathenism, were not to be overcome in a day, nor in a generation. There remains for Methodism in the West Indies the difficult and protracted, and often discouraging, task of deeper conversion and moral training, in which she will be no longer aided by the enthusiasm which the anti-slavery movement up to the year 1833 had elicited in England.

The work upon the Guinea Coast in West Africa fundamentally resembled that of the West Indies, being concerned with peoples of the same colour and temperament, whose Native religion was of a gross animistic type. While there was no conflict here with European slave-holders, the slave-trade impeded the diffusion of the Gospel in the early times of the West African Mission. The mingled population of Sierra Leone was a by-product of its activity. The multitude of converts won along these shores were gained at an unexampled cost of missionary life and health. In the early sixties the mortality of this region continued little abated, but there was no thought of retreat and no lack of recruits to fill the decimated ranks. West Africa had brought our Church into collision with Islam, and by the middle of the nineteenth century we witnessed the commencement of a struggle which promises to be long and desperate.

The South Sea Islands supplied the fifth field for Methodist Missions to the ruder races. In the islands of the Pacific the soldiers of the Cross had their most terrible adventures and won their most marvellous victories. In the Friendly group within twenty years, and in Fiji within thirty, from the time of the Missionaries' landing, the power of heathenism had been broken; cannibalism and chronic war were abolished; the basis of a Christian civilization was securely laid. The life of the Maori had been similarly transformed within this period, although contact with European vice and greed tended to make the Gospel of none effect to this gifted people.



The striking achievements above enumerated afforded a continual stimulus to missionary zeal at home, and quickened the flow of liberality toward the missionary funds. At the Jubilee celebration the visible prospect appeared to be in sight of the speedy conversion to the faith of Christ of all the simpler heathen peoples—of Africa, America, and Polynesia—provided the Church was willing to tax herself sacrificially on this account.

(3) The *civilized heathenism* of Asia presented a very different and more doubtful aspect. With Muhammadanism our missionary operations had not brought us hitherto into effective conflict ; the Church at large was at this time but little alive to the menace of Islam. Our work in China was, in 1863, barely begun, and our Missionaries there were putting on their armour. For fifty years Methodism had 'laboured' in Ceylon and India 'and had not fainted.' In the former—a comparatively limited field and that first entered—a moderate degree of success could be reported, justifying confident hopes ; in India, it must be confessed, we had accomplished little more than the breaking of ground. Confronting Hinduism, the Church was in face of the most gigantic heathen power that the world has ever known or the course of time produced. When the middle of the nineteenth century was reached, she had at last measured its forces and reconnoitred its positions ; she had gone far to develop her plan of campaign ; she had ascertained the kind of equipment and the method of approach necessary in order to carry the enemy's entrenchments. There was certainly so far no ground of jubilation over the number of converts ingathered or the growth attained by the Native Churches in India ; the turning of the hearts of its people from their idols to the living God was a distant and visionary prospect. But to discerning eyes there was a certainty of future victory, the anticipation of a forward march and a capture of the hostile fortress, not only in the promises of the eternal God and the triumphs gained over ancient paganism, but in the actual conditions of the case—in the mastery which Christian students had gained of the subtle systems of Indian thought, in the larger faith acquired and the truer apprehension of the bearing of the Gospel upon Eastern life now manifest in missionary teaching, in the experienced sympathy with the people amongst whom they laboured which had been gained through the



long years of discipline and disappointment endured by our Missionaries.

(4) The Missions in *Christian Europe*, addressed partly to scattered English folk and partly to populations wanting the pure light of the Gospel, constituted a distinct section of the Missionary Society's work abroad. But the activities of British Methodism on these bordering fields have always been limited, and its sympathies moved with difficulty in this direction. Stations opened in Europe entered comparatively little into the thoughts and plannings of the Jubilee year.

The idea of a Jubilee celebration was first mooted at the May Anniversary (1863) of the Society in London. The suggestion was taken up in the same month by the Synod of the Leeds District which claimed the initiative in the matter, inasmuch as Leeds was the birthplace of the Missionary Society. Instructed by the Synod, the Missionary Committee of this District accordingly forwarded to the General Committee in London a proposal that October 6 should be observed as the birthday of the Society, and that the Jubilee should be inaugurated in Leeds on that day. The proposal was welcomed at the Mission House, and the plans for the Jubilee were referred to a large representative Committee, drawn from all parts of the country, which met at Sheffield in preparation for the Conference of that year and discussed the subject in all its bearings. Differences of opinion arose respecting both the time and place of celebration. There were those who thought that the formal constitution of the Society in 1817 fixed the date of its origin, and that London, as the Society's headquarters, was the proper scene for commemorating its foundation. Others would have postponed the occasion because of the cotton-famine then prevailing in Lancashire, in the distress of which thousands of Methodist families were directly involved. It was also suggested that, instead of a Jubilee, the Centenary of the Society should be kept in 1869, in memory of the voyage of Boardman and Pilmoor to the American colonies—the first Methodist Preachers sent by John Wesley overseas. But these views were set aside, and it was determined with general consent that 1863 should be counted the date of the Society's Jubilee, and that its observance should be inaugurated at the forthcoming Leeds Anniversary in October. Without any mark being authoritatively fixed for the amount of the fund to

be raised, £100,000 was named as the extent of the Society's hopes.

These arrangements were ratified by the Conference, and carried into effect. The friends of the Missions from far and near rallied to the great Yorkshire city, which entered into the festival with characteristic zest. The commemoration assumed a thoroughly Connexional character. The Brunswick and Oxford Place Chapels, holding between them from four to five thousand people, were crowded to their utmost capacity at simultaneous meetings on two successive evenings. Dr. Samuel D. Waddy, John Scott, William Arthur, William M. Punshon, were the speakers who made a distinct mark. Dr. George Osborn was the President of the Conference for that year. His fine vein of Methodist sentiment and rich store of Methodist tradition, his mastery of missionary principle, and the knowledge of the foreign field acquired in his twelve years of Secretaryship, made Dr. Osborn an ideal chairman for such gatherings. His utterances were peculiarly impressive, illuminating, and persuasive, and contributed eminently to the success of the movement. Two surviving Preachers from amongst the founders of 1813 stood upon the Jubilee platform—William Naylor, Superintendent at the former date of the Bramley Circuit and the colleague of Morley and Bunting in their preparations for the first meeting, who now opened the proceedings by preaching on the evening of the fifth of October in the Armley Chapel, where James Buckley had preached on the same night fifty years before; and the patriarchal Thomas Jackson, mover of one of the numerous resolutions of the foundation meeting, who delivered on the morning of October 6, with pathos and power, the Jubilee sermon upon 'The Great Commission' (Matt. xxviii. 18-20). Most conspicuous amongst the elder laymen was William Smith, of Gledhow, Leeds, who had assisted at the birthday of the Missionary Society in 1813, and played now the part of chief host at its Jubilee. At Mr. Smith's house for more than twenty years the famous Gledhow missionary breakfast had been held, which prompted so greatly the success of the Leeds Anniversaries.

Previously to the mass meetings of Wednesday and Thursday evenings (October 6 and 7) more private gatherings had been held in the mornings of those days, to which local missionary

subscribers and the guests invited from other Districts had been gathered. To this assembly the President expounded the objects proposed in raising the Jubilee Fund, including :

(1) The building of a new Theological College (in addition to those existing at Richmond and Didsbury), in order to secure provision for the training of missionary candidates ;

(2) The removal of the existing debt on the current account ;

(3) The provision of a capital fund, from the interest of which provision could be made for disabled Missionaries and orphans of those who had died in the service, relieving the annual income of this inevitable charge. Other urgent needs were stated, which the Jubilee Fund would enable the Society to meet if it reached a sufficient magnitude. For five hours on those two mornings the stream of contributions flowed, attended by many humble expressions of gratitude to God our Saviour and of faith in the coming of the world's redemption. More than £30,000 was thus subscribed in the course of the two days. The initial Leeds celebration was followed up by provincial meetings of grouped Districts, held in quick succession in London, Manchester, Bristol, Cornwall, Liverpool, Birmingham, Hull, Newcastle, Exeter, Devonport, York, Bradford ; and across St. George's Channel in Dublin and Belfast. These central meetings were followed by Circuit missionary Jubilees, eliciting local enthusiasm and liberality from all ranks of the Methodist people.

The Missionary Districts abroad readily responded to the invitation to join in the act of thanksgiving, and unitedly contributed—many of them yet in their infancy—a sum exceeding £7,000. The Affiliated Conferences in the colonies and France took up the movement, and raised large sums for the reinforcement of the Missions within their own area. Irish Methodism was also allowed to appropriate for local missionary needs the amount, approaching £9,000, raised among its people. Deducting these latter contributions, the Jubilee Fund reached on its completion a figure close upon £180,000—not far from double the forecast made at the outset. Though crippled at this time by the cotton famine, the Manchester and Bolton District headed by a long way its fellow contributors, raising the noble sum of £31,000. London (including the Mission House) came next with £19,340 to its credit ; then Liverpool, £18,167 ; Halifax and Bradford, £12,181 ; Leeds, £8,855.

In proportion to its size and resources, York stood as high as any in the list, subscribing £5,460.

The proceeds of the Jubilee Fund were finally distributed in the main as follows :

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|---|---------|
| (1) For the purchase of Richmond College, appropriated to the training of missionary students <sup>1</sup> (the newly built Headingley College being assigned to home uses) ..... | £37,500 |
| (2) Endowment grant toward the maintenance of the above .....   | £20,000 |
| (3) Invested for the support of disabled and superannuated Missionaries, and of Missionaries' widows and orphaned children .....  | £30,000 |
| (4) Grants to various Mission Districts for liquidation of chapel-debts and towards necessary plant .....   | £63,000 |
| (5) Debt upon current account of the Society ....   | £6,500  |
| (6) Grant towards providing a working capital for the Society .....   | £15,235 |

The necessity for this last provision arose from the delay in the realization of the yearly income, a large proportion of which reached the exchequer months after it was due. The Society is thus compelled to have a chronic overdraft from its bankers and to live during the early part of the financial year upon borrowed money, incurring a heavy annual charge in the shape of interest. This loss can, under the circumstances, only be avoided by laying up a reserve fund in the manner thus indicated.

The munificent aid rendered by the Jubilee celebration lifted the Missionary Society out of the depressing financial embarrassment it had suffered for the last ten or fifteen years ; it put new heart into missionary workers at home and abroad, and enabled the Society to go on its way rejoicing. Methodism gained through this generous and successful effort a renewed consciousness both of its duty to Christ and the world, and of its sufficiency through God for that duty. The shadow cast on our Church by the schism of the mid-century had now been

<sup>1</sup> In the end it was found inexpedient to segregate missionary students from their brethren destined for the home ministry ; the former have been for a number of years past distributed amongst the four Colleges of the Connexion, the Missionary Society paying the charges due on account of students designated for its service.



lifted off. That might be said of the bounty thus rendered which the Apostle Paul declared respecting the response of the Gentile Churches to his appeal for aid to Jerusalem: 'The ministration of this service not only filleth up the measure of the wants of the saints, but aboundeth also through many thanksgivings unto God.'

## VI

### THE WANING CENTURY

Dreams of Universal Peace broken by Wars—National *v.* Dynastic Interests—Growth of Democratic Government—Absorbing Character of Domestic Problems—Impatience of World-problems reflected in the Church—An Incident in the Cambridge Senate House—The Conquest of Burma a Missionary Opportunity—Affairs in Egypt and South Africa—Formation of the South African Conference—The Opening-up of Rhodesia—China, Japan, and Korea—Discerning the Times.

By the year 1863, the Jubilee date of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, the nineteenth century had passed its meridian. The revolutionary forces sweeping through Europe at its commencement, and reawakened in the later forties, had spent themselves in giving birth to the modern democracy, which as yet was in its childhood and groping toward the uncertain future, and dimly conscious of its powers. That same year saw the climax of the American Civil War, which terminated in 1865 with the complete victory of the Northern States, putting an end to slavery on the American continent, and assuring the national solidarity of a mighty people. Simultaneous with this great event was the abolition of serfdom in Russia by the Czar Liberator, Alexander II (1858–63), which signified the accession of the Slavonic race to the community of free peoples and the dawn of a new era for Eastern Christendom. These acts of emancipation were a further outcome of the reaction of the Christian spirit against human servitude, slowly operative throughout the Middle Ages, which the Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century, with its vindication of a common manhood in the race akin to the Son of God and redeemed by His blood, had stirred to a sacred passion in the English nature, while the French Revolution had given it a powerful impulse in the political sphere.

In the middle of the century, when the thrones shaken by the political earthquake in 1848–49 had been resettled on a

more or less liberalized basis, dreams were indulged of a universal peace to be brought about by commerce and the friendship of Governments. To this hope the Great Exhibition of London, held in 1851, gave a vivid impression. The prospect was rudely dispelled by the series of wars beginning in 1854 and continued until the Treaty of Berlin in 1878, since which, despite many alarms and the constant growth of armaments, peace has prevailed amongst the Great Powers of Europe.<sup>1</sup> England was engaged as a partner with France in the first of these conflicts—the Crimean War against Russia (1854–56). That struggle, however much provoked by Russian aggression, is now recognized as a blunder on England's part. She lent her strength to support the decadent and barbarous Ottoman power, and to repress the Christian nationalities of the Balkan Peninsula for another generation. The defeat of Russia, though Turkey contributed to it but little, restored the military prestige of Muhammedanism and revived its fanaticism, to the detriment and delay of all Christian Missions in Moslem lands, and to the great encouragement of the Moslem propaganda throughout Africa. The mischief wrought by the ill-timed interference of the Western Powers had to be undone in two bloody conflicts which have ensued—the Russo-Turkish War of 1876–77 and the recent Balkan War of 1912–13. We are now witnessing the liberation of the last Christian provinces of Europe from the blighting Turkish rule. The humiliation of Russia in 1856 bore good fruit, however, for that empire itself in the emancipation of its own serfs, which speedily followed.

Through the rest of the train of European wars covering the twenty years from 1859–78 there ran the principle of *nationality* asserting itself against dynastic interests and turning to account every circumstance that tended to weaken and disadvantage the latter force. The attack of France, under Napoleon III, upon Austria (1859) led to the establishment of the modern Kingdom of Italy in 1860, to which the subsequent troubles of Austria and of France supplied occasion for appropriating the whole of the Italian Peninsula and recovering Rome as the national capital. The Methodist, with the other Protestant Missions, found their opportunity in the

<sup>1</sup> This portion of the present work was written prior to the Great War of 1914–1919.

liberation of Italy from the foreign despotisms on which papal tyranny had leaned for support. The defeat of Austria by Prussia in 1866 brought about the recovery of Hungarian nationality ; it compelled the Austrian Empire, excluded from the Federation of Germany, to throw itself upon the loyalty of its non-German constituents. But the most signal national resurrection which the century has witnessed was the rise of the German Empire, accomplished through the victories gained by Prussian arms over Austria (1866) and France (1870-71) in turn. The scene of January 18, 1871, when, in Louis the XIVth's Palace of Versailles, the Princes and Free Cities of Germany offered the Imperial Crown to William I of Prussia, signalized a turning-point of history. However much English and German policies have clashed during the last forty years, and however deplorable the competition in military and naval armaments, and the consequent increase of taxation which the ascendancy of Germany has entailed on Europe, the upbuilding of a central European state of the first rank, of Teutonic blood and Protestant faith, kindred to England and the United States, is an event of cardinal significance in a religious as well as a political sense. The land of Luther has from this time assumed her part in the world-movements of the age. Along with her colonial ambitions, Germany has developed notable missionary activities ; she has taken her place beside the English-speaking Churches in the evangelization of the heathen, and has brought into this field the scientific thoroughness, the combination of theoretical and practical ability, which she exhibits in every department of modern life.

Other manifestations of the wave of nationalism that has swept through Europe in the last half-century may be seen in the abortive rebellion of Poland in 1863, and in the agitation for Home Rule in Ireland, by which British politics have been distracted and largely engrossed through this long period. Poland and Ireland are alike ancient Roman Catholic countries, and religious creed in each country has acted as a bar against political assimilation. Roman Catholicism has identified itself with the Polish patriotic spirit in resistance to Russian orthodoxy in the one case, and with Irish nationalism as against British Protestant ascendancy in the other.

The revolution of 1868 in Spain is the only other notable





world-mission of the Gospel and the burdens it imposed. At the same time the British democracy made itself clamorously audible ; ' the bitter cry ' rose from the congested populations of the manufacturing towns, herded together under conditions growing constantly more foul and morally pernicious. The word ' Missions,' hitherto sacred in Methodism to the work of the Church on the foreign field, attached itself to the popular halls, with their network of costly remedial agencies, which displaced the old Circuit organization in the heart of the great cities. It was just at this epoch of internal development and readjustment that the Foreign Missionary income ceased to rise. The energy of the Church, the attention of its best minds, and the passion of its warmest hearts, were absorbed, as they had not been for generations, in domestic tasks and problems ; bent upon the nearer vision, Christ's people ceased to ' lift up their eyes ' to ' look on the fields white for harvest ' at the ends of the earth. The farther horizon grew dimmer to their view, as the nearer horizon gained fresh distinctness and power of appeal. The total fund of Christian liberality increased during these years of ' the Forward Movement ' in home evangelism, but a larger portion of it was impounded for national uses, and the overflow sent out to fertilize the distant wastes was correspondingly reduced. The situation thus arising goes to account for—in some measure to justify—the slackening of foreign missionary zeal observed at this juncture, and the arrest which the income of the Missionary Society suffered. It was part of a general trend in the national life and sentiment characterizing the period—a reaction from the impulse to world-expansion which possessed Christendom in the earlier decades of the nineteenth century.

An encounter which occurred on Degree Day at Cambridge in the year 1859 was prophetic of much that followed during the course of the next thirty years, both in State and Church. Sir George Grey, who had just been recalled from the Governorship of Cape Colony in disapproval of his policy of South African confederation, was the fellow recipient along with Mr. W. E. Gladstone of an honorary degree at the University. In those days the new laureate was expected to acknowledge by a speech the dignity conferred upon him. Unaware of this custom, the colonial visitor found himself quite

unprepared, and consequently not a little embarrassed. However :

Mr. Gladstone was the first called upon to return thanks. The rising statesman<sup>1</sup> had not spoken for five minutes before a sense of complete ease and comfort spread over Sir George Grey's mind. Unconsciously Mr. Gladstone was giving a theme to Sir George. . . . The future Prime Minister spoke upon the inadvisability of expending so much money and strength upon Foreign Missions, and urged that their efforts should be concentrated upon the great centres of population in Great Britain, where millions of English people were growing up in practical heathenism.

When his turn came to speak, Sir George proceeded to criticize and comment upon the position which he thought had been too strongly taken up by Mr. Gladstone. To centralize and restrict missionary effort would be to stunt the Christian growth of the Church. In commerce, in science, in philanthropy, expansion ensured health and strength. He cited the personal history and position of Mr. Gladstone himself in illustration, &c., &c. . . . He concluded a long and vigorous address amid general applause.<sup>2</sup>

This friendly collision was typical in its significance. Gladstone undoubtedly represented the rising tide of middle-class utilitarian liberalism which before long bore him to power. In his plea for concentration on Home Missions, prompted by democratic sympathies, he gave expression to the national self-engrossment and to the popular fallacy associated with it, which predominated in British statesmanship, and to a large extent in British churchmanship, during what may be called the Gladstonian era. That drift of feeling and opinion reacting against the great forces which had made England a world-people, and the deceptive argument sustaining it, were instantly apprehended by a man of Grey's experience and discernment, actuated by a liberalism that was more than insular, or even European, in its scope. Both were earnest Christians ; Grey exhibited a sympathy with the British and the Irish masses as genuine and warm as Gladstone's own. But he represented the Greater Britain, and he knew how limb is bound to limb in the parts of a mighty empire. Familiar, under the responsibilities of government, with colonial life, and with the Native races of the outlying Dependencies, and understanding, from this point of view, the issues of missionary work for

<sup>1</sup> This was many years before Gladstone's first Premiership, but he had already served as Colonial Secretary, in 1845-46, under Sir Robert Peel.

<sup>2</sup> *Life and Times of Sir George Grey*, by W. L. and L. Rees (Hutchinson) 1891, Vol. II., pp. 309-311.



Christendom and for the Empire, Sir George Grey saw the question under debate in a larger and truer aspect than was visible to the noble statesman with whom he shared the honour of the Cambridge Senate House. Well would it have been for South Africa and for England in after days if the voice of Sir George Grey, and of men like him, could have reached the ears of the British Demos, or if their judgement had prevailed in those decisive times with British Ministers and Cabinets.

Despite its policy of non-interference and the desire to limit its foreign commitments, England could not escape the hazards and burdens of Empire. Troubles arose simultaneously in India, Egypt, and South Africa, of a harassing and entangling nature. The second Afghan War of 1878-81 was attended with disasters which recalled those of forty years earlier suffered on the same ground, but it resulted in the securing of a better-marked and more strongly guarded north-western frontier for British India. A few years later (1885) the Pax Britannica was extended to Burma, and the Indian Empire reached its limit on the eastern side. The conquest of Burma, which was practically forced upon the Indian Government, opened a new field to Methodist Missions.

The cutting of the Suez Canal, completed by France in 1869, provided a direct channel for traffic with the East, and set Egypt in command of England's highway to India. Hence the purchase of the Suez Canal shares by the British Government in 1875; and hence the suppression of the rebellion in Egypt, which this country found itself compelled to undertake in 1882. From this interposition there was no drawing back, and British rule became permanent in the Nile Valley. Yet another load was laid on 'the weary Titan'! The occupation of Egypt was followed by the conquest of the Soudan, which had revolted from the former country and relapsed into barbarism and slavery, a conquest accomplished after many vicissitudes and hesitations in 1898. British power was thus carried by a great forward stride into the heart of Africa. The advance brought with it vast responsibilities for the redemption of the Dark Continent.

While England was compelled against her will to push her way to the sources of the Nile, the course of events in South Africa forced her upon the northward march. The opening of the diamond fields in the district surrounding the present town



of Kimberley in 1870 led to the inflow of European population and the firm establishment of British authority westwards of the Orange Free State. The Zulu War of 1879 broke, after a stubborn resistance, the one Native power dangerous to European domination in this quarter. This struggle was preceded by the annexation of the Transvaal in 1877, and was followed by the re-establishment of the Boer Republic, with a qualified independence in 1881, following upon the successful revolt of the Boer farmers. From this date a long period of antagonism and uncertainty commenced. The establishment of the Bechuanaland Protectorate in 1889 shut in the Boer Republics of the Orange River and the Transvaal on the western side, as the Natal territory and the Protectorate of Basutoland—the latter annexed to Cape Colony in 1871—had bounded them upon the east and prevented their access to the sea. Finally, with the formation of the British South Africa Company in the year 1889, which took possession, under the name of Rhodesia, of the immense region stretching from the Transvaal country up to and beyond the River Zambesi, the Boer found himself hemmed in on all sides by the ubiquitous Briton, whom he had been so long striving to escape.

The discovery of gold in 1885 flooded the Transvaal with an alien population, largely of British birth, bringing to the Boer State new wealth, but along with this intestine troubles and new causes of conflict with the suzerain power. How these struggles culminated in the South African War of 1899–1902, and were finally settled by the constitution in 1910 of the 'Union of South Africa' as a confederation of colonial states within the British Empire, is recent history, fresh in the reader's memory. These political transformations, and the developments of industrial and colonial activity in South Africa attending them, had an intimate bearing on missionary work in the sub-continent. The Missionary Society retained the 'Transvaal and Swaziland District,' then in its infancy, after the formation in 1882 of the South African Conference, which included in its jurisdiction the area of the Orange River State along with the British colonies and protectorates. Our work here flourished, amidst the political storms of the following twenty years, and the Transvaal Mission ranks amongst the most successful in the whole field of Methodism. The opening up of Rhodesia was quickly followed by the extension of the

Transvaal Mission to Mashonaland in 1891, and to Matabeleland in 1895, and its occupation of Bulawayo, the capital of this colony. More recently our Mission has crossed the Zambesi into North-Western Rhodesia. In this quarter, at any rate, we have not delayed to enter the open door, and our reward will be great in the years to come.

Before the last decade of the century was reached a change came over British sentiment in respect to imperial and colonial questions; the 'cold fit' so long prevailing passed away. The tragic death of General Gordon at Khartoum in 1885 filled the nation with shame, and with anger at the slack and nerveless policy which had brought this nemesis. England awakened from her torpor. Rudyard Kipling's poetry breathed the air of a larger patriotism, and sounded notes of courage and adventure in refreshing contrast to the 'weary Titan' strain of Matthew Arnold. France and Germany at this time were pushing ambitious schemes of colonial empire; their rivalry stimulated England in the same direction. An East Africa Company had been formed to cultivate Uganda some years earlier; upon its failure the country was not abandoned, but taken over as a British Protectorate in 1894 and successfully administered. At the same time Uganda was evangelized by the Church Missionary Society. Agreements were drawn up in 1890 between the British and the German, Portuguese, and French Governments in turn, amounting to a virtual partition of Africa amongst the European powers, by which provinces or 'spheres of influence' were assigned to England that stretched, with no very great interspaces, from Alexandria to Cape Town, and from Sierra Leone to Somaliland, covering the length and breadth of this mighty continent. An enormous addition was thus made to the domain of Britain's foreign empire, and in consequence to the tasks devolving upon her Christian Churches. The commencement at this epoch of the Burman and Rhodesian Missions showed that, though the missionary income was stationary, the Missionary Society was alive to its opportunities and ready to break new ground where its means allowed. The times were ripe for a forward movement along the whole line of missionary operations.

The Methodist controversy of the years 1888-90 in regard to Foreign Missions was the more grievous and untimely because it arose at the juncture when attention was being

recalled with emphasis to the world-sphere of British activity ; when England was re-asserting her place in the vanguard of Christian civilization. From west and east, south and north, British power had been extending its domination, often reluctantly, and as if driven by an overruling hand, toward the possession of the highways of Africa. This was, by the tokens of providence, the set time for Christ's soldiers to march in and carry forward the standard of His Gospel. It is a sore reproach that division and mistrust should have disabled our Church at such a crisis of opportunity. The Congo Mission of the Baptist Society, the Uganda conquests of the Church Missionary Society, the Soudan Mission founded by Karl Kumm with the concurrence of various Churches, were the fruit of this pregnant era in the history of Africa. Islam, which had shortly before this time experienced a remarkable revival in the Senussi region bordering upon Egypt and Tripoli, took prompt advantage of the facilities for traffic created by European rule, and sent its emissaries amongst the negro tribes in all directions, preoccupying over wide central areas the ground against Christ's messengers. Slow to observe the finger of God, the Church let precious years slip by and open doors stand unentered. The soldier, the Government official, the European hunter and adventurer, the Muhammedan trader poured in, and the Christian Missionary came belated, or is still to seek, in the new Africa which dates from the year 1890.

In 1893 a train of events commenced in Eastern Asia of momentous import for the kingdom of God. Japan had thrown off Oriental seclusion and apathy, and with marvellous facility—in large part through the training of American Christian Missionaries—had acquired the arts and weapons of Western civilization. She now tried her strength in a war with China, gaining a complete and easy victory over her huge antagonist. The lesson of this success was powerfully emphasized when, twelve years later, Japan emerged victorious from her duel with Russia. Not for centuries had an Asiatic people encountered, and overthrown in pitched battle, a great European power. The event profoundly stirred the nations of the East. China at last was awakened from her sleep of ages. Between the dates just referred to—in the year 1900—the Chinese Empire had been convulsed by a murderous reaction against foreign influence, attended with persecution and massacres of



Christian converts and resulting in severe punishment inflicted by European forces in alliance with Japan.

This humiliation, following on the defeat of 1893, made the triumphs of their long-despised island neighbours the more galling to the Chinese, and drove into the mind of a proud and obstinate but intelligent people the conviction that it must put itself to school with Western science. Reform began in full tide, and quickly assumed a revolutionary character. In 1911 the Manchu dynasty was swept away as obstructive and effete, and a Chinese Republic proclaimed. The terrible opium evil was now grappled with effectually ; the edicts of Government for its suppression have been seconded by the national conscience, with a force of moral resolution which deserves profound respect and warrants the best hopes for the future of the Chinese race. The martyrdoms attending the Boxer persecutions of 1900 have produced a deeply felt reaction throughout China in favour of Christianity, and Protestant Christianity has more than doubled its constituency since that date. The adoption of the Christian era by the new Republic as the basis of current chronology is indeed a matter of business convenience ; but the fact is none the less immensely significant, since it means the entrance of China into the international comity of Christendom. The recent official request of the Chinese Government for the prayers of Christian congregations throughout the Empire has appealed to the whole Church. This event marks the year 1913 as a crisis in the destiny of China, and not improbably in the religious history of the world. Such an act implies something more than toleration of Christianity ; it indicates on the part of ruling minds in the new China the conviction that religion is vital to their people's life and their despair of help from the older national faiths. The attitude of China, so far as this appeal is representative at the present moment, is that of expectancy towards Jesus Christ. Rarely has a cry more touching or more sincere gone up from the heart of a great nation. The men who uttered it believe in prayer, and they have seen that Christian prayers are not in vain.

The rush of events in China during the last twenty years has carried us over the threshold of the twentieth century. With the expiration of the last century there came, in the paroxysm of the Boxer rising, the death-struggle of the old order for this wonderful people—great, not in numbers only, but in its gifts



of industry, resolution, and practical sense, in its powers of organization and its capacity for social development.

The 'hermit people' of Korea, kindred to the Chinese and Japanese in race religion, if inferior to their neighbours in the arts of civilization, and politically dependent, have manifested a spiritual capacity of the highest order. Commencing after the year 1882, when the country was opened to foreign intercourse, the Evangelical Missions, in which the American Methodists and Presbyterians have taken a leading part, were attended with such blessing that since this date, Christianity, through purely spiritual means, and in spite of violent political disturbances, has gained a quarter of a million adherents amongst a population numbering less than ten million souls. The work of conversion in Korea appears to be as thorough as it has been rapid. Here in the Far East the close of the nineteenth century has been marked by a 'demonstration of the Spirit,' recalling by its vividness, swiftness, and energy, the scenes of the New Testament, and surpassing anything of its nature witnessed during our days in Western lands. A missionary result has been achieved bearing comparison with the triumphs of Apostolic Christianity. The record of the last thirty years in Korea supplies a timely and powerful encouragement to the Church of Christ in every part of its world-field. English Methodism has had no share in the labour and cost of this glorious undertaking, but it may share in the satisfaction of seeing a new people won for Christ, and in the stimulus which this accession gives to all who are striving for the faith of the Gospel. The Church of God would be blind as the Judaism that Christ rebuked if she did not 'discern this time.' We are witnessing one of the grand portents of human history. 'The changeless East,' throughout its enormous bulk, has begun to move! It gathers fresh momentum every day. Its gigantic forces, left without spiritual direction and contested as a mere 'yellow peril,' may condense into an avalanche sweeping down in ruin on our civilization, like the Mongol and Tartar invasions of mediæval times. Or, subdued by the Sun of Righteousness, and guided into the channels of the law of Christ, they will spread untold wealth and blessing over the face of the earth. Words fail to express the momentous urgency of the summons addressed to Christendom at this hour by the condition of the Eastern and Southern Asiatic peoples.

## VII

### MISSIONS ON THEIR TRIAL

Anti-Missionary Reaction—England Sensitive to India—Difficult Conditions of Work in that Country—*The Methodist Times* and the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes—'A Friend of Missions' and a 'New Missionary Policy for India'—Protests from India—The Conference of 1889—The Findings of the Sub-Committee endorsed by Conference—Effects of the Controversy—General Reflections upon its Causes and Course—Attempts to conform to Hindu style of life.

IN completing the first third of its hundred years' course the Methodist Missionary Society encountered, with Methodism itself, a storm that imperilled its existence; entering on the last third of the century, it suffered a wound which for the time impaired its strength. Both these injuries came to it from home, not from the foreign field. Though in every Mission Field there has been hostility, often of the fiercest, though here and there reaction and relapse have occurred—in some few instances positive defeat—while in other quarters progress has been dishearteningly slow, on the whole the Church has made continuous, and for the most part swift, advance through the last century in winning the heathen for Christ. Each decennium has been marked by some unmistakable 'demonstration of the Spirit' attesting its work in this region of heathendom or in that. In ourselves of the home Churches the straitness has been felt; fits of coldness and carelessness, cloudings of hope, faintings in the midst of labour, accesses of scepticism as to Foreign Missions, have come on Christ's people of the old Evangelical Churches. They 'did run well' when they set out on this race a century ago; but again and again 'something has hindered.'

The general causes lying behind the anti-missionary reaction of the eighties and earlier have come to light in Chapter VI ('The Waning Century'). Some reasons have appeared why Wesleyan Methodism particularly suffered in its overseas work from the depressing atmosphere and the adverse influences of

the time. In the case of corporate institutions of Church or State, just as in the individual physique, a general *malaise* breeds sooner or later some specific malady. Low conditions of health generate a morbid susceptibility; local lesions, otherwise trifling, become inflammatory; the chill brings on a fever, the abrasion develops blood-poisoning, when constitutional strength has been impaired and the vital organs work sluggishly. A writer of the period under review defines the *maladie du siècle* (the sickness of the century) as 'a nondescript cachexy, in which aspiration mingles with disenchantment, satire and suspicion with a childlike desire for tranquillity.' These terms describe the trouble from which the Church was suffering in regard to its world-work, through which in truth England and the Empire were passing as the nineteenth century declined. It is only under such conditions—in view of the straitened heart, the narrowed outlook and suspicious temper of much of British Christianity at this epoch, that we can understand the Missionary Controversy which shook Methodism in the years 1889-90, and brought the income of the Missionary Society down to the lowest level which it had touched for forty years.

Now when Methodism was in a critical mood toward Foreign Missions, when misgivings flourished and the love of many had waxed cold, the *Indian Missions* especially invited attack. For of all non-Christian lands India is the one that stands in the closest relations to England; English feeling is most sensitive in regard to that country. More than any other country of alien race, it is visited, studied, and reported on by Englishmen of every sort and school. At the same time there is scarcely any country so hard for Englishmen to understand, none that presents to the passing visitor problems so baffling and occasions of mistake so numerous, none in which the conditions of life are more strange to the stay-at-home Briton and more open to misjudgement. The public at home gives a lively, if not a very discerning or profound, attention to all questions touching the doings of its representatives in India and the movements of Indian life and sentiment.

The Church cannot give an attention too close and strict, provided it be well-informed, to the work of its Indian Missionaries, for the success or failure of the Christian propaganda in this field, considered from whatever point of view, is a matter

of momentous import, affecting as it does three hundred millions of our fellow subjects, and through them the stability of the Empire and the whole future relations of East and West in the world's life. The character of British Christianity, with its missionary force and value, might reasonably be judged by its conduct towards, and its effect upon, India. The world's estimate of Christian Missions, like its estimate of English political genius and administrative power, must be determined very largely by the measure of their achievement upon this arena. It was to be expected, therefore, for several reasons, that here rather than elsewhere Missions would be put upon their trial, when the hour of trial came.

And yet amongst all the fields of Foreign Missions, India is precisely the region where the Church has met the most formidable obstacles, the most stubborn and effectual resistance she has ever encountered, the testing-place where she was likely to find herself, in the time of censure, at the sorest disadvantage. Here, if anywhere, she might have exclaimed, with the great servant of Jehovah, 'I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought!' Hinduism is the most subtle and fascinating, the most deeply rooted and thoroughly compacted and strongly entrenched of all pagan systems. Moreover, Christianity suffered in India a peculiar disability, arising from the fact that the English rulers brought secular influences to bear on the people, many of them of a very prejudicial kind, long before they allowed the benefits of their religion to be communicated to them. In various parts of the world it is said that the entire history of tribes and countries has been determined by the priority in arrival of the European Missionary or the trader. Not till 1813—and then only under compulsion—did the East India Company allow Christ to be preached in its dominions; for two hundred years the natives of India knew the Englishman as the grasping merchant, the crafty politician, the terrible warrior, before they had the chance of knowing him as the peaceful and beneficent messenger of Christ. All this was a preparation not for, but *against*, the Gospel. It is not difficult to account for the comparatively slow progress achieved, until quite recent times, by Christian Missions in this country. There were circumstances making the period of breaking ground uncommonly prolonged, and the numerical returns of conversion at the time of inquiry particularly disappointing in the case



of our own Church, which may come to light at a later point in the history. The missionary sceptic of the later eighties had here a plausible case to urge. It was sadly easy to point out 'the failure of our Indian Missions,' after seventy years of labour; easy for the missionary at home to address Haggai's reproach to his brethren in that parched and weary field: 'Ye have sown much, and brought in little!' This was the sort of field of which St. James speaks, where 'the husbandman awaiteth the precious fruit of the earth, having long patience over it, until it receiveth the early and latter rain.' The critic who inspects the wheat-furrows in March, and finds them still frost-bound and snow-covered, months after the autumnal sowing, may cheaply mock the sower's cost and toil. 'Judge nothing before the time!'

Looking back over the quarter of a century that has passed since the Indian Missionary Controversy, we should be able to read its lessons dispassionately. One sees that some such storm was almost inevitable. 'The signs of the earth and sky portended an outbreak of discontent likely to vent itself in this quarter. Unfavourable comments on Foreign, and particularly on Indian, Missions became chronic in the public prints; travellers and tourists, old civilians and army men unfriendly to aggressive Christianity, the Hindu press, now beginning to make its influence felt, united in a chorus of disparagement, in the loudness of which depreciation favouring voices were scarcely heard. Amongst the fault-finding, Mr. William S. Caine, M.P.—an eminent Baptist layman, a temperance reformer, and a man standing justly high in popular favour—had produced in the previous year (1888), by his report of a 'cold-weather' tour made amongst the Missions of his own Church, a damaging impression—especially by his allusions to the Missionaries' style of living,<sup>1</sup> and to the doubtful results of the education given to the Brahman youth. His statements, some of them evidently prompted by his

<sup>1</sup> A story current at that time about one of those who came to spy out the land illustrates the odious misrepresentation to which Missionaries have been subject. This gentleman was the guest of the missionary homes in a certain city, and his hosts, wanting to make the well-to-do Englishman at home, clubbed together to buy an excellent *ham* for his regalement. With various garnishing this viand passed from one house to another during Mr. So-and-So's round of visits. The ham was appreciated; it figures in his published travel-story as a glaring example of missionary 'luxury,' multiplied by as many times as it had appeared for his behoof on successive tables. In one form or other this sort of thing too often happened—an ill reward for the hospitality which strained its resources to greet the visitor from home!

intercourse with educated Hindus, disquieted not a little the minds of earnest Christian people at home, giving definiteness, as well as aggravation, to the mistrust already entertained. At the same time the Salvation Army, then beginning its Indian warfare, was sending out its enthusiastic soldiers to make their way as bare-footed mendicants amongst the Native population. Their methods reflected unmistakably on the cost and cumbrousness of the regular missionary organization—a contrast which the advocates of the Army did not fail to use to the disadvantage of the latter. The experience of a few years was to show what a lamentable cost of suffering, and of life itself, the cheap evangelism of the Salvationists entailed in a tropical climate, and how ineffectual was its impression on the caste people of India.

It was difficult for the Indian Missionaries to bear up against the array of their assailants and the manifold obloquy thrown upon them at this time. But when, in the spring of 1889, the *Methodist Times*, seconded by the *Joyful News*,<sup>1</sup> opened fire upon them, they felt that they were 'wounded' indeed 'in the house of their friends.' The situation suddenly became serious to the last degree; their collective character as Missionaries was at stake, and with that the future of the work of God committed to their hands.

The *Methodist Times* newspaper was the exponent of liberal and progressive Methodism, and represented 'The Forward Movement' in the home Church. At the same time this journal was eminently a personal organ, identified in a very marked way with the aims, and with the temperament, of its editor, that extraordinary man, Hugh Price Hughes, who was the most admired and the most widely influential Methodist Preacher of his generation—probably the most forceful personality the Methodist ministry has known since Jabez Bunting. Arraigned by Mr. Hughes and Mr. Champness at the bar of public opinion, the Indian Missionaries perceived that they were on trial for their lives, that the issues raised must be faced at whatever cost, and the accusation probed

<sup>1</sup> *Joyful News* was conducted by the late beloved Thomas Champness, who had then recently sent out Evangelists of his own training to China and India to assist the Missionaries. He based on a somewhat brief experience sanguine views as to the low cost at which European agents could be maintained in the latter country. *Joyful News*—a halfpenny weekly paper—had a large circulation amongst Methodists in humble life, and therefore played an important part in the controversy. Mr. Champness was honourably distinguished by his fairness in admitting replies and corrections to statements from his own pen.

to the bottom. The gathering storm had burst ; the reproaches against them, floating in the air intangibly for years, had taken definite and most hurtful shape. These reproaches had been endorsed by responsible men their brethren, who had given their names to a clear and unmistakable indictment, that could be put to proof.

On April 4, 1889, there appeared in the *Methodist Times* the first of four successive articles, contributed by 'A Friend of Missions,' under the title of 'A New Missionary Policy for India,' which was introduced with unreserved approval by the editor in his leader for the week, headed 'The Fatal Mistake of Dr. Duff.' Commencing in the first of the four papers with an attack on the plan of higher education through the English language, which had been pursued more or less for a generation past by all the leading Missionary Societies engaged in training advanced Hindu students, the writer went on to describe the mode of living, the expenditure, and the social habits of the Missionaries, determined (as he supposed) by the educational policy they had adopted and the 'aristocratic' associations into which it brought them. In the third article he proposed a *via media* for his former colleagues in respect of income and style, striking the middle path between the 'luxury' and aloofness in which (as he asserted) they actually lived, and the asceticism of the Salvationists and the Roman Catholic priests. A series of pungent editorial notes in subsequent issues revealed the 'policy' as, in fact, Mr. Hughes' own policy for our Indian work, endorsed with the full authority of his name and to be furthered by all the resources at his command as Church leader and journalist. This endorsement gave to the papers a currency and significance of the most formidable kind.

The 'New Policy' was sprung without preparation on the bewildered Methodist public ; it had never been submitted to the Missionary Committee, of which Mr. Hughes was an influential member ; nor had it been propounded to the Missionaries in India, with some of whom the writer of the papers was in friendly correspondence at the time, and amongst whom he had lived as fellow worker and a frequent guest a few months previously. The Friend of Missions soon frankly declared himself as the Rev. Dr. (now Sir) Henry Simpson Lunn, who had been sent by the Missionary Society in 1887 (after a course of medical training received at Dublin) to



establish a hospital at Tiruvalur in the Negapatam and Trichinopoly District of South India, and who found himself compelled by continued and prostrating illness to return to England within the year. At the time of writing Dr. Lunn was Mr. Hughes' assistant in the West London Mission ; he was a young man of mark and ability, an enthusiastic and successful Preacher, and endowed with many amiable qualities. Coming from such a quarter, and appealing to minds already affected by mistrust, the onslaught of the *Methodist Times* caused a violent sensation, which appears in the direction it took to have surprised its authors more than its victims. Had Mr. Hughes and Dr. Lunn merely assailed the educational part of the missionary policy pursued in India, the matter might have been discussed calmly ; the British public would have disturbed itself on the question only too little. It was easy to prove that higher education was neither so predominant, nor so expensive,<sup>1</sup> nor, above all so unfruitful and misdirected a part of Indian missionary labour, as the *Methodist Times* assumed. There was nothing at all 'new,' as there was nothing very definite or practical, about the suggestions made in this sense. The scheme of education which Dr. Duff had initiated nearly sixty years before the Friend of Missions landed at Madras had been vehemently opposed by contemporary Missionaries ; it had by this time lived down opposition on the field, through its success in leavening Indian thought and laying the foundations of the coming Christian order, and through its effect in aiding and stimulating every part of the Church's work. Amongst its keenest defenders were, and are, many of the Missionaries most devoted to pure evangelism and vernacular preaching. The reply to Dr. Lunn and his champion on this ground was obvious enough, and the discussion might have been harmless or even profitable, had it been kept within educational lines. Alexander Duff's noble services to India and to the Church of God have safely surmounted this and every other disparagement thrown upon them.

But the 'New Policy,' as it was developed, assumed quite

<sup>1</sup> The two questions of educational policy and missionary stipend, as might have been readily ascertained, were perfectly distinct. Employment in college or high school did not necessitate any costlier diet or dress, nor receive any higher remuneration, than was required for the ordinary Missionary. The allowances of Wesleyan Missionaries had been fixed by the Home Committee long before higher education was thought of, and had remained substantially unaltered, for educational and non-educational Missionaries alike, ever since 1819.



another bearing. The first article (‘ Try Democratic Methods ’) led up to the second and third, entitled ‘ The Evils of a False Position ’ and ‘ The Untrodden *Via Media*,’ which, as the English and Indian public alike at once perceived, constituted a grave moral impeachment against the body of Missionaries. It was amazing to see Mr. Hughes, while reaffirming his companion’s statements, week by week, with pained sincerity imploring his readers to understand that he made no reflection on the character of his brethren, though on all hands Dr. Lunn’s description was quoted, with distress and indignation by the Missionaries’ friends and with unconcealed delight by their enemies, as affirming not only ‘ the failure ’ of Christian teaching in India, but also the self-indulgence and pride of life on the teachers’ part to which that failure was due.

The theory was that in devoting themselves to the English education of youths of the higher castes, Missionaries had learnt to live in a lordly style befitting this occupation and conforming to that of Anglo-Indian Society, and that in consequence they had separated themselves from the masses of the people amongst whom their proper work lay, and imposed needless burdens of expense on the Missionary Societies. The author claimed to be testifying after ‘ careful consideration,’ and with ‘ a thorough knowledge of the facts ’ ; he wrote like a man of ample experience, under the constraint of mature and well-grounded convictions. For the average reader, unversed in Indian life and manners and construing the terms used in their English significance, the picture drawn of missionary habits was telling and effective, as it was certainly clever ; the articles were (in journalistic phrase) ‘ good copy ’ ; the excuse given for the assumption by the Missionaries of ‘ feudal ’ style was only too plausible, and rested on well-understood tendencies of human nature. People who did not know better, especially those already disaffected toward Missions, freely accepted the portrait of the Indian Missionary Dr. Lunn gave them as a true presentment, seeing it vouched for by a man of Hugh Price Hughes’ wide knowledge and high integrity.

So the controversy was set on foot. Protest and replies were quickly forthcoming, and for months the Methodist newspapers were ringing with the clash of arms. The secular press, in England and India, took up the battle ; and the

enemies of Missions hailed 'the Friend' as a welcome ally supporting their worst imputations—a witness out of the missionary camp to the hollowness of its professions and the futility of its endeavours. In vain the *Methodist Times* strove to confine attention to the question of 'policy' and to disclaim all personalities and charges against missionary character. The allegations of Dr. Lunn's articles had been made; they were declared calumnious, and contradicted point by point; nevertheless they remained unretracted, and the editor declared that he had in possession abundant proof of their accuracy.

The Wesleyan Conference of 1889, meeting three months after the publication of the incriminating papers and before there had been time for any report on the situation from the Indian staff, took up the subject upon the representation of the Missionary Committee at home. After discussion in Sub-Committee, and an animated but restrained debate, in which the Conference was evidently divided between sympathy for the distant Missionaries and regard for Mr. Hughes, a series of resolutions was passed with a view to peace, bearing first upon *policy*, to the effect that 'the main energy of our Missions in India is devoted to directly evangelistic efforts,' and that 'it is necessary to maintain our existing educational enterprises' while aiming at 'a large extension of evangelistic work.' As to *stipends*, the principle is laid down, to which no one could object, that 'Missionaries should continue to be placed in a financial position fairly corresponding to that of Ministers in comfortable circumstances at home,' with 'adequate allowances for all special costs arising out of the peculiarities of climate,' &c. It is suggested that greater variations than hitherto may be equitably made in Missionaries' allowances according to age and circumstances, and with a view to economy; and the Missionary Committee was instructed to effect such readjustments where feasible. On the point of character, a supplementary clause was appended to the section on 'Allowances' in the following terms:

The Conference is convinced that there is no ground for believing that our Missionaries live, or wish to live, in habits of self-indulgence; but that, on the contrary, they are an earnest and self-denying class of men.

It was widely felt that the above resolutions were more amiable than adequate to the situation which had been created.

They appeared to attach quite a secondary and incidental importance to the reflections on the manner of life of the Missionaries, in which the gravamen of the 'New Policy' articles lay; and the exculpation under this head read like a verdict of 'non-proven' rather than a hearty and confident acquittal. A vague and general contradiction was given to charges specific, detailed, and persistent, which had carried conviction to many minds—charges such as could only be disposed of by a detailed investigation into the facts alleged in proof. While Mr. Hughes accepted the resolution of confidence above quoted, he did not, and declared that he could not, retract the statements of his newspaper which had caused offence, and to these Dr. Lunn gave additional point by figures which he laid before the Conference by way of self-defence, as sustaining his assertion of the needless luxury of Indian missionary life.

The injury done to the Society's work and to the reputation of its agents in India was, in fact, aggravated rather than remedied by what transpired at the Sheffield Conference. The controversy was bound to go on, until settled by some searching judicial inquiry. The meekest of men felt that they could not continue to live and work under the imputations of luxury and lordliness continuing to be cast upon them before their own people.

This was soon made evident by letters from South Indian Missionaries explicitly challenging the allegations of the *Methodist Times* as slanderous, and demanding an impartial and thorough trial. These letters were premonitions of the course adopted by the Conference of Wesleyan Missionaries representing all the Indian Districts, which met at Bangalore in the succeeding winter. This assembly adopted, after careful and expert consideration and full discussion, an extended report upon the whole subject, which was forwarded to the Missionary Committee with a view to publication. After characterizing the account of missionary life given by the *Methodist Times* and noting its express application to the members of the Conference, the report goes on to say :

The writer acquits those whom he professes to describe of all moral blame in leading the life which he attributes to them; and we heartily acknowledge his innocence of all intention to imperil our character.

nevertheless

we regard his representations as a most damaging caricature of our life and spirit. We declare that the description of Indian Missionaries

presented in these statements is wholly and radically false. We profess that our life and spirit are not only not such as are here portrayed, but do not even give colour or excuse to such description of them.

This sweeping denial was then carried into particulars concerning the alleged luxury of the Missionaries in respect of stipend, house, conveyance, and 'social status'; and concerning the 'aloofness' from the Native population which was laid to their reproach. The report proceeded to dwell on the mistrust disseminated by the *Methodist Times* amongst the supporters of Missions in England, on the handle it supplied to their opposers in India, and the suspicion and alienation that were being engendered by its libels amongst the Native Christians—an effect which is stated to be 'nothing less than calamitous.' The declarations of unabated trust in their missionary staff made by the Committee and the Conference at home, while welcome to the men assailed, were by no means sufficient, it was said, to vindicate them in public opinion, so long as the charges in question remained unwithdrawn and unexamined by any judicial tribunal. It was pointed out that, in face of the Conference and its exculpatory resolutions, Dr. Lunn had boldly reiterated his most injurious statements—'maintaining his ground,' as the *Methodist Times* affirmed—and that Mr. Hughes declared he had ample evidence in reserve to justify all that he and his friend had written. The Missionaries were left, in default of actual trial, in worse plight than before.

The Bangalore protest went on to say:

In presence of statements so destructive to our reputation, and to the whole interests of the Society, there is but one course for us to pursue—to deny in the most solemn manner the allegations made against us, and to require, as an imperative necessity, that vindication from without which any *ex parte* denial of the charges is unable to afford us. We, therefore, by a unanimous resolution call upon you for the appointment of a Commission to inquire into the statements made by the *Methodist Times*, and by Dr. Lunn in Conference, and into the evidence on which they are based.

Elaborate tables were attached to the report, exhibiting in detail the items making up the stipends of Missionaries in the several Districts and the calculations by which these sums were determined, showing that the necessary costs of maintenance,



apart from housing and conveyance, in the case of a single man varied according to locality from £111 to £123, and of a married pair from £219 to £255. There were added some suggestions for the grading and readjustments of salaries in accordance with these findings, the effect of which would be to reduce the total outlay under this head by the amount of £110 annually. Before dissolving, the Bangalore Conference appointed a Sub-Committee to consider the reply to its report which should be received from the Mission House, and to take such action as might be necessary thereupon.

The full gravity of the crisis was now manifest to every one. It was impossible for the Missionary Committee to resist this demand for investigation coming from the whole body of its Indian Missionaries, however unwelcome the task might be, and however needless for its own satisfaction. It was equally impossible for the accusers (for such Messrs. Hughes and Lunn were in effect, though not in intention) to decline the inquiry. A message was therefore dispatched by telegraph inviting the Indian authorities to send home two representatives to lay their case before the Missionary Committee. George Patterson, Professor at the United Christian College in Madras, and William Hare Findlay, Superintendent of the Negapatam Mission, were deputed for the purpose, and appeared in due course before a special meeting of the Missionary Committee, at which Mr. Hughes and Dr. Lunn were also present. Both parties received a full hearing, and after some discussion it was decided to appoint a Sub-Committee of nine—with the President of the Conference (the Rev. Charles H. Kelly) in the chair, the other eight members (four Ministers and four laymen) to be selected by him—which should

examine into all the facts and statements (as published in the *Methodist Times*) bearing upon the position and character of the Indian Missionaries.

The Commission was empowered to summon witnesses and call for necessary documents, and was instructed to report its judgement to the appointing Committee, which should then decide upon the whole case. The Commissioners chosen were the Revs. Thomas Allen, Wesley Brunyate, George Fletcher, Henry J. Pope, along with Sir George H. Chubb, Mr. John Clapham, J.P., the Right Hon. Henry H. Fowler, M.P., and

Mr. H. Arthur Smith, barrister-at-law—constituting, as every one admitted, a thoroughly able and impartial court of inquiry.

Before the above meeting of the Missionary Committee, Messrs. Hughes and Lunn had drawn up a printed 'Summary Statement' on 'The Proposed New Missionary Policy,' setting forth the evidence they had previously held in reserve, supplemented by statistics and opinions more recently gathered, and traversing the contentions of the Bangalore Conference. A rebutting statement was prepared and laid before the Sub-Committee by Messrs. Patterson and Findlay, offering a mass of evidence forthcoming in defence. These two preliminary expositions considerably facilitated the work of the Commission.

The inquiry was opened on Tuesday, May 27. Four days were spent continuously in hearing and examining witnesses, amongst whom appeared in chief the parties to the case, including Mr. Champness and a number of former residents in India, Missionaries and civilians. Two Missionaries' wives supplied material testimony on matters of housekeeping and domestic expenses. The investigation bore mainly on the charge of *luxury* in the style of missionary diet and house-establishment, which involved discussion of the relative purchasing power of money in India and England and the ordinary cost of European maintenance in the former country; and on the charge of *aloofness and lordliness* of spirit and deportment toward the Native people. The unveiling necessitated by this trial was humiliating but unavoidable; probably no body of Christian Ministers had ever before been put to such a scrutiny. The most private family details, the smallest minutiae of provisioning and account-keeping, were laid open to public view; the statements of the accusers were such as admitted of no other mode of defence; they had a distrust which touched even the daily bread of the Missionaries and their intimate domestic relationships.

The hearing of evidence and cross-examination of witnesses, which occupied nineteen hours, being complete, the Sub-Committee devoted several meetings, held at intervals, to arriving at and drawing up its findings, which were expressed in the following propositions:

(1) That our Indian Missionaries have not the means to live, and do not desire to live, in luxury, as our English middle classes understand the word.

(2) That the stipends paid in India are not in any sense the equivalent of the sum of £1,000 a year in England,<sup>1</sup> nor do they approach thereto.

(3) That on the whole there is no substantial difference between the purchasing power of the stipends as expended in India and the same sums if expended in England.

(4) That owing to the recent depreciation of the Indian currency, the remuneration of the Indian Missionaries does not exceed the stipends and allowances paid to Wesleyan Ministers in England.

So much as to the charge of 'luxury.' The statements made as to attendance at Court functions, in proof of the Anglo-Indian 'style' of Missionaries and their 'feudal' attitude, the Sub-Committee finds to be 'inaccurate and misleading. Some of the Missionaries,' it is true, 'do attend occasionally the levees of the Viceroy or the Lieutenant-Governors.' In view of their frequent official dealings with the governing authorities, the Sub-Committee considers it desirable that they should do so. It reports, however,

(1) That such attendances, considering the body of the Missionaries as a whole, are comparatively rare.

(2) That they do not necessitate, nor do they involve the Missionaries in any pecuniary expense whatever.

(3) That there is nothing in the fact of such attendances which is calculated to, or does, in fact, hinder the work of the Missionaries among the Native population, or in any way prejudice their mutual relations one to another.

(4) The Sub-Committee, while putting out of view all questions of policy, find that the assertion that the manner or the place of living of the Indian Missionaries tends to alienate them from the Native population, or hinders the success of their Native work, is not sustained. In the cases in which the attempt has been made to live in Native quarters and in the manner of the Native population, the sacrifice of life and health has been great, and it appears to have been attended by no compensating advantage as regards the success of the labour so carried on. The Sub-Committee also is of the opinion that the relations between the Missionaries and the Native Ministers are cordial and fraternal.

They go on to speak of their report as

completely exonerating the Indian Missionaries of our Society from all charges made or suggested against their character or the character of their work, whether in respect of their mode of living or of their relations with the Native population, Christian and otherwise.

<sup>1</sup> Such was the assertion which Dr. Lunn had confidently made in writing on 'The Evils of a False Position.' Proposition (1) was also a formal contradiction of assertions made in the above article.

At the same time they draw attention to the modes and rates of payment adopted by certain other Missionary Societies, which appear to be somewhat more frugal than our own, intimating, however, that 'these payments are now under consideration and may shortly be modified'; and they decided to 'recommend' the paying of stipends 'in the silver currency of the country rather than as at present in the gold currency of England,'<sup>1</sup> and suggest the desirability of graduating salaries as between senior and junior Missionaries, and between those living in town and country stations.

The verdict of the Sub-Committee was endorsed by the General Committee, and finally by the Conference, without appeal from either side. The disproof of their injurious allegations inevitably recoiled upon those from whom they proceeded. Mr. Hughes showed at every point a chivalrous regard for his young colleague and friend, on whom the principal onus of the miscarriage rested. Since his return from India Dr. Lunn had served as junior Minister, under Mr. Hughes' superintendency, in the West London Mission, where his services were greatly valued. The desire was universal to avoid any measure which would injure that Mission, or wound its trusted and beloved head. However Mr. Hughes might have misjudged his brethren abroad, they had no wish but to honour and uphold his work at home. Yet when the Conference, adopting the words of the Missionary Committee, had 'recorded its profound regret that charges so grave and so unsustained should ever have been brought against' its Missionaries, the men responsible for those charges could not but be sensible of its displeasure. Dr. Lunn laid his resignation before the Conference; he was allowed, at Mr. Hughes' request, to accept the post of Chaplain to an important Christian institution in London. Three years later, however, he retired from the Wesleyan ministry, for some time holding a ministerial charge under the American Methodist (Episcopal) Church in Switzerland. He continued on terms of close friendship with Mr. Hughes, and in association with the work of the West London Mission he has given many proofs of his attachment to Methodism, and to the old missionary friends from whom the

<sup>1</sup> The Indian Government not long after this date adopted a gold currency, establishing a fixed ratio between the silver rupee and the gold soverign, which nullified the above recommendation. The fluctuations in the ratio of the two metals had greatly embarrassed all monetary reckonings as between India and England.



controversy severed him. They have long since forgiven a mistake which, however rash and however damaging to them in its consequences, was free from the poison of malevolence or disloyalty.

The whole story of the conflict is laid bare in the volume entitled *The Missionary Controversy*, which was published in July, 1890, and contains, along with the relevant documents and speeches, a verbatim report of the proceedings before the Commission of Inquiry. After nearly a quarter of a century this book may now be read impartially ; as a *document humain* it may reward perusal. It presents psychological problems and a dramatic situation—the juxtaposition of East and West, of Gospel and intellect, of rhetoric and statistics ; the appearance on the stage of Missionary, civilian, journalist, artisan, traveller—worthy of the study of a Robert Browning. Some future poet will haply pluck out the heart of this extraordinary duel between brothers who had made on the one side, unwittingly, a thrust at the honour of brothers, which the latter strove to repel with their utmost vigour, anxious none the less to avoid inflicting a counter-wound on their assailants. The editor of the *Methodist Times* and his collaborators had been too eager for advance to test the ground on which they proceeded, and too much absorbed in their ‘ policy ’ to observe the defamatory bearing of the statements adduced in its support, which ‘ leaped to the eyes ’ of the reader. So far was this consequence from occurring to them, and so little did they know the men they were discussing, that Dr. Lunn wrote to one of the two Missionaries then in India, who had afterwards to withstand him to the face, intimating to him the sensation that was coming ; ‘ but,’ the writer added, ‘ I am sure you will agree with me ! ’ Had the authors of the ‘ New Policy ’ drawn the moral inferences contained in their premisses, they must have suspected that some flaw lay in their argument or some radical unsoundness in the basis of supposed ‘ fact ’ on which it was built. Feeling the confidence they protested in the ability and integrity of the missionary staff, had they perceived the incrimination of that staff into which their contention carried them, they would, one must think, have had the patience and the fairness to communicate their conclusions first to the men implicated, and to give them the opportunity of criticism and explanation, before publishing those conclusions to all and

sundry. How vastly better for all concerned would have been such a private testing of the articles on the ' New Policy ' than the sifting which they had afterwards to undergo from the same quarter, in the face of all the world ! The case supplies a powerful illustration of the wisdom of the procedure which our Lord has laid down, in the directions of Matt. xviii. 15-20, for the conduct of differences between Christian brethren.

So this unhappy dispute ended, which threatened first the undoing of our Indian Missions abroad, and then, by its reaction, that of the West London Mission which God had so richly blessed at home. Sad indeed as the consequences were, they must have been infinitely worse but for the Christian temper and the underlying sense of Methodist brotherhood animating the combatants. The effect produced on those who stood farther away from the struggle, influenced in many instances by partisanship rather than by principle, was more lasting than in the case of those immediately concerned. A resentment remained which operated for long to the disadvantage of our Church's work both at home and abroad, accentuating the unhappy rivalry, so contrary to the spirit of Methodism, which had already made itself felt as between the two interests. No one, it should be said, strove more earnestly to destroy the competition between Home and Foreign Missions, and to repair the breach he had unintentionally widened, than did Mr. Hughes himself in after years.

It is fatally easy to excite suspicion toward a sacred cause. Men are ready on all hands to belittle missionary devotion and to question the purity of motives loftier than their own ; it is sadly difficult to win back the confidence that has once been withdrawn. Ten men in such a case will read the attack for three who will trouble themselves with the defence. Hundreds of missionary subscribers found in Dr. Lunn's ' revelations ' an excuse for closing their pockets against the collector. They would not have the patience to hear the other side, and to follow with an open mind the turns of the controversy to its conclusion. The record of the Society's income during the early nineties shows the depressing effect of the campaign of 1889-90 upon missionary zeal. It was with heavy hearts that the Indian Missionaries resumed their work, exonerated from a burden of reproach which, unremoved, must have crushed them, but conscious that their work in India for some time

must be more difficult in many directions, and that sympathies had been alienated from them at home which it would take long to recover.

There had come about earlier a coolness between Hugh Price Hughes and the Foreign Missionary Committee, the knowledge of which helps to account for his subsequent attitude and for the fact that he ventilated<sup>1</sup> the new Indian policy in his newspaper instead of laying it first before the responsible authorities. Some years earlier he had spoken at the annual meeting of the Missionary Society, and appealed for an immediate abolition of the debt then resting upon its funds. He did this in a speech of overwhelming passion and power—with such effect that £7,000 were contributed in answer to his challenge on the spot. The scene was one of enthusiasm hardly paralleled in the Society's best days. After this, Mr. Hughes was moved to set on foot a campaign in the missionary interest throughout the country, and asked the opportunity to lay his plans for the purpose before the General Committee, on which he had not then a seat. He was listened to, and politely dismissed, and heard no more of his proposals. He was naturally hurt and disconcerted by this rebuff, which, along with other circumstances, led him to regard the Missionary Committee as hide-bound by tradition and officialism. In fact, Bishopsgate was rather widely considered at that time—with how much justice it would be difficult to say—to be the head quarters of Methodist conservatism, and served as a kind of whipping-post to the champions of the Forward Movement. In attacking 'policy' the *Methodist Times* aimed its blows at the home government of the Missionary Society, little recking of their effect on the far-off Missionaries, and ignoring the fact that they were answerable for the style of living and the relations toward the people which, on evidence so lightly adopted, was censured in language of libellous force.

In 1889 Hugh Price Hughes was at the height of his wonderful

<sup>1</sup> The editor of the *Methodist Times* believed fervently in public discussion, and saw in it a panacea for the ills of the commonwealth. 'Ventilate, ventilate the question; let the open air of debate play about it,' was one of his watchwords. See the *Life of Hugh Price Hughes* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1904), pp. 300-3. Chapter XIII. of this memorable biography, entitled 'Dark Days,' is occupied mainly with the Missionary Controversy, which brought the one heavy cloud upon a course of singular brightness, full of ardour, hope, and buoyant energy. It is a pleasure to testify to the candour and kindly spirit in which Miss Hughes has written of this episode in her father's life, doing justice to the motives of his unwilling opponents and recognizing 'the strategic blunder into which, with the noblest intentions, he allowed himself to fall.'



career in London, living, as his daughter-biographer relates, in 'a tremendous rush and whirl . . . fighting in at least six places at the same time.' The West London Mission was only two years old ; and the Sunday afternoon addresses, in which he struck now at one and now at another of the iniquities and religious shams of the age, were stirring the conscience of London. He had but lately emerged from a desperate struggle for social purity, in which he had stood side by side with Josephine Butler and William Thomas Stead. In November, 1890, came the fall of Parnell, the Irish Home Rule chief, whom 'the Nonconformist conscience,' by the lips of the West London Missioner, deposed from political leadership for his immorality. It was no wonder if a man thus intently pre-occupied, with his mind full of questions of civic righteousness and the condition of the British masses, while preaching the Gospel from its burning centre to its far circumference before a congregation singularly various and exacting in its needs, failed to study the conditions of missionary life in India with the thoroughness required for a just appreciation. He 'went into' the controversy 'with the careless'—and, we should add, the generous—'recklessness of a boy,' as generals on these isles have often been in the habit of doing. His adventure was, in fact, a 'Charge of the Light Brigade,' gallant but disastrous, and a charge delivered on the ranks of his astounded friends. The 'New Policy' wore, to its promoter's eyes, a 'democratic' air ; Mr. Hughes felt a godly jealousy—justified, had the facts been as he assumed—lest the Methodist Preachers in India should be leaving the care of the ignorant and down-trodden to spend their strength on the proud and intellectual Brahman and to consort with their high-placed English fellow countrymen. Our work in India appeared to him, measured by English standards, a failure ; and *here*, he imagined, he had laid his finger on the cause.

For it must be acknowledged that the visible and measurable results of Indian Missions—and emphatically of the English Methodist Missions, up to that time—appeared to spell failure and to call for some new policy. The old policies, judged by human standards, had little to show on their behalf ; if the seed of a great harvest was in them, this harvest was an unconscionable while in showing above-ground. At the very time when, amongst experienced Missionaries—those who had



'watched longest for the morning'—the work of higher education had gained almost universal acceptance, and was seen to be operating powerfully and surely toward the Christianization of the people, and when Indian missionary methods, after long and manifold experiment, were attaining to something like a scientific mastery of the problem and 'patience' was coming within sight of 'her perfect work,' just then this violent distrust broke out at home, threatening to spoil everything. And it took for its spokesman, alas! the very man, supreme in his own sphere, whom the best Missionaries honoured most—the man who, with his swift glance, and generous sympathies, and sure touch for human realities, would have shown himself the readiest to testify that his brethren understood their work, and were doing it as true men, had he been able to see things with his own eyes or to survey at leisure and comprehensively the Indian questions he had taken in hand. He would have shown that his brethren were far indeed from spending their strength on teaching science to Brahman aristocrats and indulging the habits of a proud and seclusive luxury.

There was a farther misapprehension on Mr. Hughes' part which not a little aggravated the contention. It was difficult for him to look at any Methodist question apart from the ecclesiastical situation at home. 'From my father's correspondence at this period,' writes his biographer,

it is evident that he regarded much of the controversy as a last effort of the reactionaries (in the Home Connexion) against the Forward Movement. Those who clung to the old order and feared the new were bound to gather themselves in a last desperate resistance against the leader who had made a strategical blunder and given them, so it was felt, considerable provocation.

Of this obsession the missionary representatives laboured hard to disabuse Mr. Hughes' mind; they protested again and again that they had been in no way instigated or encouraged by his opponents in England, and were absolutely innocent of partisan motives or incentives; that they appeared against him with sorrow and reluctance, compelled to clear themselves and their work of a dishonour fatal if not removed. The development of the New Policy for India was, it appears, part of Mr. Hughes' ecclesiastical strategy, and he presumed that the resistance offered to it from India was made at the prompting,

if not under the guidance, of hostile generalship at home. In this alarming apprehension he was entirely mistaken. It is only due to the men at that period most frequently arrayed against Mr. Hughes on the Conference platform to say that they were scrupulously moderate in their tone throughout the controversy, and that its reopening after the Conference of 1889 was distinctly unwelcome to them. No one of importance in Methodism betrayed the wish to take advantage of Mr. Hughes' misfortune or to make capital out of it to the detriment of the Forward Movement.

Hugh Price Hughes could not but appreciate this consideration felt for him when the trouble was over. The letter, quoted on p. 311 of his *Life*, which was written from the Bristol Conference (of 1890) at the culmination of the Controversy by Dr. Ebenezer Jenkins, an ex-Indian Missionary and Missionary Secretary—one of those most aggrieved by the *Methodist Times*, and most indignant at its misguided aspersions—shows how warm a place, and how large a place, the offender held in the affection and confidence of the Methodist ministry, and how earnestly his severance from the Conference was deprecated on all hands. To many observers it appeared that the abatement of the heat of party in later years was due as well to the fine spirit shown by the combatants as to the danger of disruption so narrowly escaped. Something was due to the greater circumspection, tenderness, and consideration for his brethren which the impetuous leader of the Forward Movement learnt to exercise. Mr. Hughes retained unimpaired the love of the people, and his influence was never more conspicuous than in the months immediately following on the Missionary Controversy. He had shown one of the finest qualities in a Christian leader of men—the grace to bear meekly a needed reproof.

Eight years later he rose, with universal approbation, to the Presidency of the Wesleyan Conference, and in that commanding office made the furtherance of Foreign Missions a chief delight. The fact that in 1900 he proposed for a vacant Secretaryship at the Mission House one of the two Missionaries who had confronted him in 1890, and unsparingly controverted the 'New Policy,' proved, like other incidents of the kind, how wholly this noble man's mind was free from rancour over the bygone struggle, and how completely the estrangement attending it had been removed.

The approximation to Indian modes of diet and living, which Dr. Lunn urged upon the Missionaries from the columns of the English newspaper, had often been attempted in point of fact, and for the most part with melancholy results. The European is, and must remain, in tropical India a costly exotic ; it is vain to strive against the fixed bounds of nature. Not in one case out of a hundred is it possible for an English-born man or woman to become completely acclimatized and naturalized to such degree as to live continuously on Native food, in Native houses, and on terms of physical equality with the people of the soil. Were it possible, this assimilation would be useless in India, since it offends instead of conciliating Native feeling. On the principles of Hinduism, *birth* fixes immovable barriers between race and race, caste and caste, and for the stranger to affect Hindu customs in dress, diet, and the like, is an intrusion which he resents as a kind of sacrilege. It would have been strange indeed if Indian Missionaries, yearning to get nearer to the people they sought to save, and irked by the constant pressure for economy coming from the Boards of the straitened Societies at home, had not sought escape from an invidious position in the direction which the writers in the *Methodist Times* were good enough to point out to them. Again and again enthusiastic young men, eager for self-sacrifice, had asked :

Cannot we dispense with this armour against the sun ? Cannot we do without this string of servants, this spacious house and imported food ? Cannot we ' be made like ' our Indian ' brethren ' and ' be found in fashion ' as the men of the land we live in, those we have come to seek and save ? Was not this Christ's own method—the way of the Incarnation ?

Dr. Lunn was by no means the first to ask questions such as these. The experiment has been tried repeatedly by men of nearly all the Missions, with the same result. In fact, the figures at which the missionary stipends had been fixed by the different Societies, after manifold trial and careful examination and re-examination carried on through a long term of years, was (speaking broadly) the irreducible minimum for efficient European life and work in India, whether in the case of civilian or servant of the Church. Inquiry would have shown that the path of retrenchment recommended in the ' New Policy ' was as far as possible from being ' untrodden.'

At the very time the Controversy was at its height—in the summer of 1889—a young Wesleyan Missionary was being carried home to England, physically shattered after seven years' work in India, to 'lie,' as he relates, 'for three years in utter powerlessness, with pain that knew no ease,' and enduring a misery 'too dark even for despair'—a martyr to the attempt so complacently proposed on paper. Benjamin Robinson was sent out to the Mysore District in 1882. During the last illness preceding his death, which took place in 1913, Mr. Robinson recorded his Indian experience in a touching and exquisite little book entitled *In the Brahman's Holy Land*<sup>1</sup> (the Hill Country of Western Mysore), which reveals the saint and scholar and lover of his kind, and gives in its few pages illuminating glances into Hindu character and the conditions of missionary work in India. As Dr. Henry Haigh says in his Foreword to the brief story :

No man ever flung himself with greater zest or determination into the life, language, and thought of the people among whom he was appointed to labour. . . . It became a passion with him to break down barriers, to reconcile differences, and to embody in his life the spirit of a true fraternity. It was in this way that he came to make the experiment of which this book is the story. The idea was not new. Other men—one here and another there—had in their degree made the attempt. But the general missionary judgement and practice in India were, and are, otherwise. Not with a desire to discount that judgement, and still less with a desire to be singular, did Mr. Robinson enter upon his path. But he was willing to do anything possible that might truly bridge the distance between himself and his people ; and he thought he was in a singularly favourable position for making this particular attempt. No man ever adventured himself on an enterprise moved by more self-forgetting chivalry or truer Christian compassion. How it began, how it proceeded, and how it ended is all written in this book. Suffice for me to say that it proved a costly experiment. It not only compelled his return to England utterly broken in health, but its results have pursued him all through his ministry.

Shortly after these words were written the end came, mercifully, to a long martyrdom. *In the Brahman's Holy Land* is a commentary on 'The New Policy for India'—fact and experience confronting theory.

Another sort of experiment has been made in the Indian field which deserves careful study, combining efficiency for

<sup>1</sup> Published by C. H. Kelly (1912) at 1s. 6d., and dedicated 'To all who love mankind.'



certain purpose with economical advantage. The settlements of the Oxford and Cambridge Mission in North India appear to prove that there is important work to be done, especially in the great cities and among the student class, by celibate Missionaries, a group of whom may live together in bachelors' quarters under proper conditions of health, at a moderate cost. But this cannot become the rule of missionary life for a Church like our own, and it appears that such a mode of living is only serviceable in special localities and particular branches of missionary work, while on the other hand it is only practicable for exceptional men. But there is a sphere for the celibate Missionary in India, as in other countries; and there will surely be volunteers forthcoming for the posts which men can best fill who, like the Apostle of the Gentiles, are ready to make themselves 'free from all' that they may become servants of all.'

## VIII

### ADMINISTRATION OF THE FIELD<sup>1</sup>

Problems of Administration—The 'Instructions' of 1834—Two great initial Advantages—The 'Synod'—The Chairman of the District—Administration at the Home Base—The Missionary Committee—The Chairman of the Officers' Meeting—Sub-Committees—Secretarial Visits to the Different Fields—Financial Administration—Provision of 'Plant'—The Missionary Trust Association—The Financial Sub-Committee—Discipline—Administration on the Field and Control at Head Quarters.

THE Christianization of heathen lands is no simple, easy process, to be effected just by eager and confident devotion. Rather it is a vast and complex process which, in addition to faith and zeal and labour, calls for the exercise, under Divine guidance, of such judgement, skill, and organized wisdom as men apply to the greatest worldly concerns—to waging war or extending commerce or founding and administering empires.

Problems of administration as understood to-day were, however, very remote from the minds of the early outgoing Missionaries, and even of the Secretaries who sent them out. A set of 'Instructions to the Wesleyan Missionaries,' drawn up (or revised) in 1834, throws interesting light on the conception then held of the Missionary's needs, duties, and difficulties. These instructions were directed to be read annually in the 'District Committee' by the Chairman, and report was to be made in the Minutes as to their faithful observance. They embody, therefore, the standard of our missionary policy as it was understood eighty years ago.

The nine instructions begin with one which should still take precedence of all others in directions to outgoing Missionaries. 'We recommend to you, *in the first place and above all things*, to pay due attention to your personal piety.' 'Personal piety'—the spirit of Christ exhibited in character and life—is permanently the first qualification and the most effective appliance of every Missionary. The other instructions, alike

<sup>1</sup> This Chapter was written by the late Rev. W. H. Findlay, M.A.

in what they enjoin, in what they omit, and in the order of them, are very significant. Number II. impresses 'the absolute necessity of using every means of mental improvement,' seeking 'an increase of general knowledge,' and especially acquaintance with 'Christian divinity.' Not a word here or later about study of the religions, customs, characters, or even of the languages of the peoples to whom they are going! Number III. exhorts to brotherly unity among themselves, suggesting how early in the Mission Field history this necessity emerged as of cardinal importance and difficulty. Peculiarities of temperament, opinion, and habit are restrained in the homeland by the force of numbers, the pressure of public opinion, the comparative insignificance of the unit. On the Mission Field, especially in pioneer days, they get their chance; and unless grace and wisdom prevail, they might easily wreck the usefulness of some little band of heroic workers.

Next comes an injunction that reads oddly in days when we have learnt the blessedness of sinking our denominational differences on the Mission Field, and planting there branches of the Church of Christ that shall not perpetuate the historic divisions of the West. It solemnly reminds the Missionaries that they are **WESLEYAN METHODIST PREACHERS**, pledged to preach 'in the most explicit terms' the doctrines of Methodism, and to enforce all its rules and usages. How much the years were to teach as to the kind of preaching required among heathen peoples and infant Churches, and as to the modifications of the usages of home Methodism called for by Mission Field conditions! This clause, however, contains one instruction that is eminently up to date; it bids our Missionaries 'cultivate a catholic spirit towards all your fellow labourers in the work of evangelizing the heathen; and aid them to the utmost of your power in their benevolent exertions.' It is a satisfaction to record that throughout our missionary history this attitude has rarely been departed from, and that the spirit of missionary co-operation so widely prevailing to-day is altogether congenial to the temper and practice enjoined on Methodist Missionaries from the beginning. Instructions V. and VI. warn against meddling in politics and secular disputes, and prescribe such circumspect behaviour toward rulers as shall win for the Missionary freedom to pursue his work.

Instruction VII. is almost the only part of this early

document which touches questions of administration. It is addressed to the brethren in the West Indies, but its directions 'are also to be considered as strictly obligatory on all others, so far as they are applicable to the circumstances of their respective stations.' It defines the sphere of work of the Missionary as 'the ignorant, pagan, and neglected black and coloured population,' with the significant addition of 'all others who may be willing to hear you.'<sup>1</sup> And it goes on to lay down methods of instruction to be used, and standards of discipline to be maintained, both in admitting heathen to baptism and membership and in continuing persons in membership. It enjoins care for the young of the flock in Sunday and Week-day Schools, and judicious extension of the work to new areas.

Instruction VIII. shows that the Mission House, even in these early days, was alive to the necessity and the difficulty of keeping the Church at home instructed and inspired by news from the field. It reads, 'It is *peremptorily required* of every Missionary in our Connexion to keep a journal, and to send home frequently . . . copious abstracts of it.' And the shrewd—and still pertinent—warning is added :

Only we recommend to you not to allow yourselves, under the influence of religious joy (!), to give any *high colouring* of facts ; but always write such accounts as you would not object to see return in print to the place where the facts reported may have occurred.

Only the last instruction (IX.) shows the faintest recognition of those financial relationships which supply the means, and much of the matter, of missionary administration. Its main purport is to lay down, very emphatically, that no Methodist Missionary may 'follow trade,'<sup>2</sup> and this prohibition is enforced by a declaration that

The Committee feel themselves fully pledged to pay an affectionate attention to all your wants, and to afford them every reasonable and

<sup>1</sup> While many other Societies strictly limit the efforts of their Missionaries to 'heathen' populations, and the Christian communities formed from among them, our Society has from the beginning, in the spirit of Wesley's great-souled dictum, 'I look on all the world as my parish,' encouraged its Missionaries to feel responsibility toward all neglected or misguided souls in their neighbourhood—British soldiers or civilians, nominally Christian half-castes, semi-pagan Romanists, &c.—as well as toward the heathen, who are their main objective.

<sup>2</sup> Some Societies in the early days deliberately paid their Missionaries inadequate salaries, which were to be supplemented by trading, farming, &c. This enabled them to increase their staff of Missionaries, but at the price of entanglements and mischiefs that soon condemned the policy.



necessary supply. And this pledge, they doubt not, the generosity of the friends of Missions will, from time to time, enable them to redeem, so long as you continue to regulate your expenses by as much of conscientious regard to *economy* as may be found to consist with your health and comfort, and with the real demands of the work of God.

These phrases embody the principles which have ever since been recognized as holding good between the Committee and its Missionaries—provision 'for health and comfort, and the real demands of the work of God' on the one part; 'all your time and energies to be sacredly devoted to the duties of your Mission' on the other part. But it was through many mistakes and confusions, and some heart-burnings, that these sound principles were gradually to be embodied in the rules and methods which to-day determine the financial position of the Missionaries, and relate 'the generosity of the friends of Missions' to 'the real demands of the work of God.'

The study of this early manifesto has made it clear that, in responding to the missionary call, home Methodism addressed itself to a task of growing variety, complexity, and delicacy. It is the business of this chapter to trace through what organs, and by what processes of development and adjustment at home and on the field, an enterprise so distant and difficult has been administered. We shall first deal with the field end, and then with the home end, of the relationship.

Methodism began its work abroad with two great advantages, from the point of view of administration. Its system and methods at home, which naturally formed the administrative outfit of the Missionaries, had taken shape under missionary conditions (for heathen England was a veritable Mission Field to Wesley and his preachers), and therefore proved in the main admirably suited to missionary conditions abroad. And Wesley's organizing genius had so quickly and so effectually developed in 'the Society of people called Methodists' the organic sense, that wherever they might scatter over the world they instinctively tended to organize themselves, and things about them, according to type.

Thus the Methodist Missionary from the first had it in his blood that he must be a member of some Synod,<sup>1</sup> and assemble once a year at least with his brethren for review and counsel and mutual admonition; that he must needs be under the

<sup>1</sup> Though it was not till 1893 that he called it a 'Synod.'

guidance of a Chairman of a District, and either have or be a Superintendent. These important beginnings of administrative machinery needed no devising or imposing; they automatically accompanied the Missionaries to every field, and everywhere they proved, and have ever since proved, as well fitted for the administrative needs of the work abroad as if they had been created for the purpose. So wherever there were two or three Missionaries to gather together, they from the beginning met in annual Synod and sent home to the Mission House elaborate Minutes of their meeting, modelled as closely as the situation permitted on the Minutes of the home 'District Meeting.' The earliest of such Minutes that survive among the archives are those of the Antigua and the Bahama Districts in the year 1815.

It thus appears that the Conference and the Missionary Committee have two organs on the field through which their authority operates, namely, the District Synod<sup>1</sup> and the Chairman of the District. Neither of these terms, however, means quite the same on the Mission Field as at home. The Synod on the Mission Field had in course of time to combine the functions of a disciplinary court in relation to the Ministers of the District, English and Native, an ecclesiastical council of the Churches within its area, and also a local Sub-Committee of the Missionary Committee in England, the executant of its will, the dispenser of its funds, and its appointed adviser. Gradually it came to be recognized that these functions are so various as to call for appropriately constituted bodies to fulfil them, and by a reconstitution effected in 1903, and applied to the several Mission Fields as they are ripe for it, the Synod was limited, approximately, to the sphere belonging to it in the home Church, viz. the supervision of the Ministers and Circuits in the District, and a body called the Local Committee was instituted, to be the agent of the Missionary Committee at home in the administration of its grants and the supervision of the work maintained by them. The Local Committee includes all the Missionaries in the District (though such as have not completed their missionary probation<sup>2</sup> have no vote), and also 'gentlemen (European or Native) of proved devotion

<sup>1</sup> In some parts of the field there are also Provincial Synods.

<sup>2</sup> In addition to the ministerial probation of four years to which all Wesleyan Methodist Ministers, at home or abroad, are subject, the first two or three years on the Mission Field are regarded as a term of missionary probation.

to our Missions and qualified by capacity and local experience to be of service in our counsels.' The Local Committee at its annual meeting receives an official letter of instructions and counsels from the Mission House, and sends in reply, in addition to the Minutes of its meeting, a letter reviewing the chief features of the year's work, and expounding to the home Committee its immediate plans and needs and hopes.

The Chairman of the District has on the Mission Field the additional designation of 'General Superintendent.' Historically this title connects with those earliest days of our Missions, when Dr. Coke was General Superintendent of them all, and those not much later days when various large fields of Methodist expansion had their General Superintendents. In what may be called domestic Methodism, whether at home or across the waters, the term soon passed out of use. In the United States 'Bishop' superseded it; in British Methodism an anti-Episcopal trend abolished it. But in the Mission Field the designation never went entirely out of use. A sound administrative instinct recognized the wisdom of concentrating responsibility and authority in one pair of hands under the pioneer conditions of Missionary Districts. The limited functions of a Chairman of a District at home did not cover nearly all the duties and responsibilities which, almost of necessity, devolved upon the Chairman abroad, and in process of time 'Chairman and General Superintendent' had become the regular designation of the Chairman of a foreign District. As General Superintendent he is held responsible by the home Committee for the general welfare of the District and the progress of the work in all the Circuits; and he has extensive powers, not strictly defined, but fairly commensurate with his responsibility. When the Local Committee is in session its authority is paramount; in the intervals of its meetings the General Superintendent can, in emergency, exercise most of its powers.

The dual control by Local Committee and General Superintendent offers an interesting experiment in combining the Presbyterian and Episcopal modes of government. The experiment has amply justified itself, and the local administrative system for the W.M.M.S. will bear comparison with that of any other Society. One may question, however, whether this combination of the Presbyterian and the Episcopal would



have been possible were it not that neither Local Committee nor General Superintendent possesses *ultimate* authority, all their action being subject to confirmation or revision by the home Committee, and ultimately by the Conference.

We turn now to the administrative machinery at the home base, which, however effective the local supervision may be, cannot fail to have important influence on the welfare of the work. And the administration of interests so various and extensive, presenting at every turn conditions and problems so remote from those of the homeland needs, it will be recognized, the most carefully adapted machinery. Under the authority of Conference our Foreign Missions are administered by a 'General Committee' and a body of officers consisting of General Treasurers and General Secretaries. The General Treasurers have always been honorary officials. Throughout nearly the whole century one of the two Treasurers was a Minister, the other a layman; but in an important revision of the constitution of the Society, which was ratified by Conference in 1912, the appointment of two lay Treasurers was sanctioned.

In the infant years of the Society its secretarial office, as we have seen, could be fulfilled as an honorary addition to other exacting ministerial duties. But so early as 1818 it was found necessary to set apart a Minister to give his whole time to the work of the Mission House; and as the work grew, the number of Ministers so set apart had to be increased, until in 1834 what has become the normal number of four Missionary Secretaries was reached. From 1851 to 1859, and again from 1865 to 1876, and from 1890 to 1896, an attempt was made to administer with three Secretaries; but the experiment served only to establish the necessity of a larger number.

For purposes of correspondence with the field and of introduction of the business in the Committee, the Secretaries are associated with particular fields; but the responsibility of the several Secretaries is not limited to the fields or the departments of the work which are allotted to them as their special care. The two Treasurers and four Secretaries form a sort of cabinet, which collectively advises the Committee. In connexion with the revision of the constitution referred to above, it was recognized as desirable on many grounds that, without interfering with this equal and collective responsibility



of the officers, there should yet be one of their number who might be regarded as specially representing the Society for public purposes, and might be a *primus inter pares* in the Mission House counsels. To these ends Conference has, since 1912, annually appointed one of the Secretaries to be 'Chairman of the Officers' Meeting.'

One of the chief problems in providing effective machinery for the home administration of Foreign Missions is that of securing, in Committee and officers, adequate knowledge of Mission Field conditions. As regards the officers, one obvious measure to this end is the appointment of Secretaries who have had experience as Missionaries. Joseph Taylor was the first returned Missionary to be so appointed. For some years two or more have been usual.

The presence of returned Missionaries on the staff does not, however, secure by any means all that is desirable at head quarters in the way of acquaintance with the field; for the returned Missionary's knowledge is both limited in range and, in the case of fields where conditions are rapidly changing, may soon grow out of date. As the requirements of efficient administration have been better realized, growing importance has been attached to secretarial visits to the field.

As regards the Committee, the policy has been followed for many years past of maintaining in it a strong infusion both of returned Missionaries and of laymen who have lived or travelled in Mission lands. In recent years the Laymen's Movement has emphasized the value of laymen's visits to the Mission Field, and is thus promoting the equipment of the Missionary Committee for its difficult work. But perhaps the most effective measure that has been taken for educating the Committee in knowledge of the field has been the development of field Sub-Committees.<sup>1</sup> In 1901 an India Sub-Committee was appointed as a tentative measure, and in connexion with the 1912 reconstruction all the fields were placed under the care of sectional Committees, the Eastern Committee having charge of the work in China, India, and Ceylon, the Western Committee of the work in the Western fields, and the African Committee of the work in Africa and on the continent of Europe. In such sectional Committees

<sup>1</sup> No reference is made here to such Committees as the Finance and General Purposes Committees, since these belong rather to home administration, and have been already described.

much more detailed and intimate attention can be given to the work of the field than is possible in the General Committee ; and their members in course of time attain most valuable equipment for the administration of the field they are associated with. The institution of these field Committees has contributed very materially to the home administration of the field.

All through the century, perhaps, the most numerous and serious of the difficulties of administration have been financial ; for the stewardship of money is in every sphere one of the main instruments of God's education of us. In the earliest days the financial problem, as between the Committee and the Missionaries, seemed simple. ' Let us know your wants, and as the generosity of our friends shall enable us, we will supply them.' To send out the messengers of the Cross and to furnish them, from time to time, with what was needed for ' health and comfort ' seemed to make no great demands on business skill, either at the Mission House or on the field. But complications very soon began to appear. When nearly a year might elapse between the dispatch of the letter from the field reporting need, and the receipt of the remittance dispatched instantly in reply, it obviously was necessary that the Chairman on the field should have authority, within limits, to raise funds locally on the Committee's credit. Much trial of wisdom and patience, many reams of correspondence, many years of gradual improvement of method, were required before it was satisfactorily determined under what conditions and to what extent such powers should be entrusted to the Committee's representatives on the field, for normal or emergency use.

It was not long also before difficulties began to arise between Missionaries and home authorities over the interpretation of ' provision for health and comfort.' Personal idiosyncrasies, the differences of one field from another in regard to climate and cost of living, and, in some fields, problems of policy as to the style of living called for in the interests of the work, caused much perplexity at head quarters, and brought some missionary careers to an untimely end. Only in the slowly accumulating wisdom of decades have regulations been arrived at for the several fields, to govern these questions of

the personal requirements of the Missionaries. 'Provision for health and comfort' in course of time presented problems of provision for maintenance and education of children, of furlough allowances, of outfits, of sickness and superannuation allowances, of the furnishing of houses on the field, and not a few other questions no less delicate and difficult than they are important for the welfare of the work. The Missionary Committee found itself the Quarterly Meeting, and the Mission House officers found themselves the Circuit Stewards, of a world-scattered Circuit; and many and perplexing have proved the responsibilities of the office.

The story of the Society had not gone far before the necessity of suitable plant for the developing work opened a new chapter of financial problems. In early days it was the hope at head quarters that property responsibilities need not be incurred if the allowances made to the Missionaries were large enough to enable them to rent such accommodation as they might need; and for a while the Committee even went the length of disclaiming responsibility for acquisition of sites or erection of buildings, affirming that the contributions of the Church were designed for the maintenance of the Missionaries and must not be applied to other purposes. The force of circumstances soon disposed of this contention; and the Committee has had to become an extensive property owner, holding thousands of pieces of land, in all the continents and under all sort of tenures; erecting and maintaining an extraordinary variety of buildings, from the little village school of mud and thatch to the great strong hospital of modern plan and equipment.

The difficulties connected with the tenure of property on the Mission Field have largely been solved by the incorporation in 1896 of a 'Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Trust Association,' to be the legal holder of all the property of the Society on the Mission Field. The difficulties of administration have been reduced by growing wisdom in adjustment of the respective claims of home control and Mission Field freedom, by cumulative experience at home in the handling of property questions, and by the institution on the field of building Sub-Committees of the local Committees.

The difficulty of finding money for the provision of the extensive plant the work requires has not been so easily solved.



The Committee has always maintained the sound principle that the regular annual income should not be applied in the way of capital outlay upon buildings ; and throughout the greater part of the century the provision of plant depended, in the main, on special gifts and emergency efforts, and the property equipment of the work was even less adequate than its equipment with living workers. The first considerable step toward a worthier treatment of this great branch of the Society's responsibility was effected by help of the grant of £100,000 made to our Foreign Missions from the Wesleyan Methodist Twentieth Century Fund. It is, however, the remarkable Centenary Fund which has for the time being delivered the work from its chronic embarrassments in regard to plant. There will still no doubt be special developments from time to time that will call for special gifts from the friends of the cause ; but it is matter for much thankfulness that the new century of the Society's history finds a Plant Fund established which will enable the Committee to deal much more adequately than hitherto with the current property needs of the field.

The full range of missionary finance was not reached by the addition of responsibility for property to responsibility for maintenance of Missionaries. Almost every step in the development of the work brought some new complexity into the finance of the Society. Native workers of one category after another, Schools with their own manifold items of income and expenditure, industrial concerns with problems of commercial profit and loss, emergencies of famine relief, burdens of Orphanages, Native Churches at first entirely dependent on the Committee's grants and gradually approaching self-support—these are only some of the most conspicuous of the branches that the financial tree put forth. A Superintendent on the field may now not seldom have as many as two hundred separate accounts to keep ; and at the Mission House a considerable staff, directed by expert skill, is required to work the financial machine. A far cry from the day when Foreign Missions seemed to involve no more than sending out as many Missionaries as possible, with ' reasonable provision for health and comfort ' !

The adjustment of procedure, and of relationship between head quarters and the field, to this enormous development has not been effected without misunderstandings and confusions.



Business aptitude has not always accompanied the qualifications that have led to the appointment of missionary Secretaries; nor has it been held indispensable in the candidate for the Mission Field. It is only in recent years that instruction in even the elements of book-keeping has formed part of the preparation of the outgoing Missionary. From time to time, however, God has given the Society at head quarters men with a genius for financial administration, who have overhauled the machinery and framed such apparatus of financial schedule and the like as would both guide the Missionaries and give the Mission House clear and complete knowledge, and therefore means of adequate control, of the application of its funds. For close upon thirty years a Finance Sub-Committee of the General Committee has been instituted, and has ever since had a most important place in the administration; and in recent years the officers sit as a Budget Committee in October and November, and prepare in great detail a budget of income and expenditure for the coming year. Since 1914, also, the accounts of the Foreign Districts have annually been carefully scrutinized, under the supervision of the Treasurers, and reported upon to the General Committee. Finality in financial system is not to be expected while Foreign Missions are a living tree, putting forth continually shoots of new missionary method and agency, and while the transfer of burden and responsibility from the Church at home to the Church on the field is in gradual and varying process; but it may thankfully be recorded that never at any preceding period have the business arrangements, whether on the field or at home, been so satisfactorily organized, or worked so smoothly and efficiently, as at the opening of the new missionary century.

We have now cursorily surveyed the most extensive area of missionary administration—that of finance; there is another field, not so wide in area, but of no less vital importance—that of discipline. Through what agencies, and with what measure of success, have the Conference and the Missionary Committee exercised that oversight of the character and conduct, the fidelity in doctrine and service, of their representatives abroad, which the Conference so sedulously exercises in regard to the ministry at home, and which on the Mission Field is no less vital to the welfare of the work than it is difficult of application? Mission-field conditions in some respects

tend strongly to confirm the faith and fortify the moral and spiritual energies of the Missionary ; but there are also serious temptations to moral and spiritual declension, and eccentricities of faith and practice that could not thrive in the ordered garden of the home Church may find free growth in that jungle environment. Our earlier missionary history witnessed the voluntary retirement from our work of not a few men who could be ill spared, on grounds of doctrinal, and especially ecclesiastical, divergence from the tenets of Methodism. And all through the story of the century there have been occasional instances of Missionaries who have made moral shipwreck. Such lapses are to be thought of with no less pity than reprobation ; for the atmosphere in which the Missionary does his work is such that only by a perpetual miracle does he escape infection.

The Synods on the Mission Field have from the beginning fulfilled with great care and seriousness that function of individual ministerial oversight which is one of the chief functions of the Methodist Synod at home. Regarding each ordained Missionary<sup>1</sup> in the District, the four searching questions by which every Wesleyan Methodist Minister in the home work is also annually measured are asked every year. When, by the blessing of God upon the work, a Native ministry began to come into existence, the Native Ministers, at first in some Districts invited to attend the Synod as visitors, were soon recognized as having their seat and vote in that ecclesiastical assembly by right, and have ever since shared equally with their English brethren in the administration of discipline. In the intervals of the Synod the Chairman of the District has extensive emergency powers, being authorized even to suspend a Missionary pending due inquiry into charges arising against him.

All disciplinary inquiries conducted on the field are referred home for confirmation or revision ; except that in India and Ceylon the District Synods are grouped under Provincial Synods. Each province has a Provincial Court of Superior Jurisdiction, which has final powers in regard to certain minor

<sup>1</sup> All the ministerial Missionaries are ordained before they are sent to the field, though they are not 'received into full connexion' till they have satisfactorily completed their four years of probation. The annual inquisition regarding the conduct and fitness of lay Missionaries is as thorough as in the case of the ordained ; but it takes place, not in the Synod, but in the Local Committee.

matters of discipline affecting the Native Church and ministry. Since discipline is, in the policy of Wesleyan Methodism (at present), ranked among pastoral functions, disciplinary proceedings on the field are reported to Conference, not through the General Committee, but through a Missionary Committee of Discipline, consisting of Ministers appointed by the Pastoral Session of Conference. The machinery on the field and at home proves effective in maintaining a unity of 'faith and order' throughout the far-spread area of our Church's activities without seriously hampering the growth of the Native Church toward that freedom, that self-development and self-expression which have always been our ideal for it.

Perhaps the widest and most persistent problem of the administration of a Mission Field is that of the distribution of control between the field and head quarters. The Missionary individually, and still more strongly the Missionaries collectively in the Local Committee or Synod, feel natural ambition to manage their own affairs, and are alive to the superiority given them by their local knowledge and experience. The Home Committee, on its part, feels the responsibility of the administrative trust committed to it by Conference, and of the confidence implied in the contributions entrusted to it by the Methodist people; and it recognizes that fidelity to its trust requires it to maintain effective control over the work carried on by help of the funds that pass through its hands. The Missionary, on his part, conscious of a Divine vocation, and giving all his powers to his holy calling, feels that he ought not to be reckoned a mere subordinate of home authorities, but rather a 'fellow servant in Christ Jesus,' a colleague in the high enterprise, whose gifts of situation and knowledge, of judgement and insight, should find the fullest scope. The Committee, on its part, recognizes the advantage of its wider administrative horizon, is conscious of its functions of relating the expenditure to the income, and of co-ordinating the claims of the various parts of the field. The snare of the Home Committee has been to spend its time and strength on details that could be more efficiently handled on the field; the snare of the Local Committee to force the hand of the home authorities in matters where they are bound



to maintain control. And distance, and imperfect means of communication, have all along accentuated the difficulties attaching to these divergent aims and claims and tendencies.

So the administrative story of the century has been a story of progress achieved under conditions that have continually exercised the grace and wisdom of all concerned. Much has depended on the personality, on the one hand, of those in office at head quarters, and, on the other hand, of outstanding Missionaries on the field endowed with special gifts of energy or statesmanship, or even merely of determination. Gradually, as the decades have passed, the principles that ought to govern such a situation have grown clearer and have become more steadily operative. It is coming to be understood and remembered on the field that whatever rights of initiation and construction appertain to the field, the right of final decision (except in cases where a measure of autonomy has been granted to the local Church) must needs be retained by the home authorities; and that therefore those on the field must, individually or collectively, refrain, until the Home Committee's sanction is received, from any such action—in purchase or disposal of property, for instance, or in the extension or contraction of the work—as would force the Committee's hand.<sup>1</sup> And it is coming to be recognized and remembered by the home authorities that, to the utmost extent which faithfulness to their own trust will permit, it is both wise and just to give full scope to all the powers of the workers on the field, and make the necessary harness of the Gospel chariot as little galling and hampering as may be. The correlative of the Home Committee's claim to finality of decision is the Local Committee's claim to opportunity of making representations before action affecting its area is taken at home. Of both these great claims it may be said that to-day they are theoretically conceded; that they are sometimes neglected, or swept aside on the plea of emergency, but that they are steadily growing into habits governing the delicate and difficult relationship of the Church at home to its representatives abroad.

<sup>1</sup> The development of cable communication has in recent years done a great deal to enable this principle to be sedulously observed, without the danger, often serious in the past, of sacrificing important opportunities on the field through the delay involved in awaiting sanction from home.



In 1914, on the threshold of the second century of its work, the General Committee adopted a carefully considered 'Statement of Policy,' and this statement is given as an appendix to this chapter.

## A STATEMENT OF POLICY

ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY BY THE GENERAL COMMITTEE,

APRIL 29, 1914

N.B.—(1) The following is a statement of policy, in part observed by the Society for many years, and in part called for by the progress of the work and the rapidly changing conditions of our time.

(2) The term 'policy' is used throughout to express either the measures and methods adopted by the Society in pursuance of the ends which it has in view, or the principles on which those measures depend.

(3) The term 'Society' is used for convenience and because it is familiar, but it must never be forgotten that the work in every part is the missionary work of the Methodist Church, and the Missionary Society as such is not a guild of voluntary enthusiasts within the Church, but the Church itself as organized for world evangelization.

(4) This entire statement is based upon certain fundamental assumptions which do not need re-affirmation, e.g. :

- (a) That the Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church, the source and fullness of her life; and that all rule and all authority belong to Him. (Every reference to 'independence' or 'self-support,' or 'self-direction,' has its meaning within the larger truth.)
- (b) That the ministry derives its authority from Christ our Lord, and that Ministers have in every case given assurance of their call to the office and work of the ministry before the question of their selection for service on the foreign field can be considered.
- (c) That in all its plans and aims the Society is dependent on the guiding and furthering grace of the Holy Spirit.

## THE FIELDS OF OCCUPATION.

While it is not for the present possible to occupy any new territory, the frontiers of several fields are being steadily moved outward, as for example in Rhodesia, the Gold Coast, and Upper Burma. In every District already occupied the Society is observing the recognized laws of comity with other Missions, so as to avoid overlapping of effort and waste of energy. In large city centres spheres of influence are determined by mutual agreement with other Missions; while in country districts larger areas have been marked off for occupation by the several Missions. This rule will be closely followed in all natural expansion of the areas at present occupied.

A necessary proviso of the above rule is that where an area has been

assigned to the Society it should be occupied adequately within a reasonable time; failing that, the right of sole occupation must be relinquished.

#### MEN.

The present state and prospects of the work call for a careful consideration of the type of Missionaries to be sent to each of the fields. The initial stages of our work are past. Even in the youngest of our fields there is a Native Church and a growing Native Agency, lay and ministerial. The conditions of the work make it necessary that the Foreign Missionaries in every District, whether lay or ministerial, shall be a band of picked men capable of leadership.

It is the policy of the Society to select and send out men whose gifts and training give assurance of their fitness for the work to be done. The work calls for men of culture and strong character, of wide outlook, and having withal a high sense of vocation. This is true of Africa and the West Indies, no less than of the Eastern fields.

The Society will continue to submit all its Missionaries to a period of missionary probation on the field. It is undesirable in all interests to retain on the field those who after patient and sympathetic trial do not appear to be well fitted for the work to which they are sent.

#### THE PLACE OF THE MISSIONARY ON THE FIELD.

The chief duties of the Foreign Missionary on the field will be :

(1) The general oversight of the Native Church; the understanding being always that the oversight in detail should be transferred as rapidly as safety allows to an indigenous ministry and to duly constituted local courts.

(2) The guardianship of doctrine; a sphere in which the young Churches on the field will long need the help of those who have profited by the age-long conflicts of belief and growth of Christian experience among the Churches in the West. In all this there is no intention that the Missionary should enforce on the infant Churches of other continents those aspects of Christian thought that are peculiarly European.

(3) The training and due equipment of an indigenous Christian ministry in all its branches—for pastoral, evangelistic, educational, medical, and philanthropic service. It is the policy of the Society through its Missionaries on the field to select its workers with special reference to character and a sense of vocation, and then to train them with a constant twofold reference—to the work for which they are needed, and the measure of their gifts. For the case of village churches and for elementary village Schools, an elementary agency is needed. For the oversight of groups of these Churches a more advanced agency is called for. For the pastorate of older Churches, and for responsible evangelistic work, men of special gifts and thorough training are urgently needed, and it is the policy of the Society to give to those native candidates who show fitness for it a thorough Biblical and theological training. This work will occupy an important place in the programme of duties falling to the Foreign Missionary.

(4) Leadership in all evangelistic work, whether preaching, teaching, or healing. It is essential to such leadership that in each of these

branches due attention be given to the training of Native workers who will assist until they are able to replace the Foreign Missionary.

(5) To watch over the expenditure of the funds provided by the home Church. In this work the Missionary, knowing intimately how the money is obtained, must bear special responsibility to the Committee and to the home Church.

(6) Work among women is, on the field, under the direction of the Superintendents of Circuits and the Local Committees. At the home base the work is conducted and administered by the Committee of the Women's Auxiliary. Both at home and on the field it is an integral and important part of the Society's activities.<sup>1</sup>

#### THE CHURCH ON THE FIELD.

Recognizing that it is not entrusted to us or to any other foreign Society to complete the evangelization of the lands in which we are labouring, but rather to raise up a Christian Church able and willing to assist until it succeeds us in that work, it is the primary aim of the Society to lead men and women into personal fellowship with Jesus Christ ; to unite those who have become disciples into Churches ; and to edify the Church until it becomes an efficient and faithful witness of Jesus Christ.

It is not the desire of the Society to impose on the infant Churches of the Mission Field every detail of form and constitution found useful in the Methodism of this land. It is rather its aim to embody in the offices and constitution of those Churches forms that are indigenous and familiar in the lands where the work is growing.

It is found, however, that the flexible constitution of Methodism, its circuit and connexional system, its lay offices, its order of lay Preachers and Class-leaders, its note of warm personal experience, and its provision for Christian fellowship, are admirably adapted to every part of the Mission Field. These features it is the aim of the Society to foster and maintain, with such modifications in detail as local conditions may call for.

It is the policy of the Society from the first to set before infant Churches on the Mission Field the duty of contributing to the support of their own ministry, and of erecting their own Church buildings, and early to encourage them to take part in the direction of their own affairs.

It is further the policy of the Society to seek without ceasing to lay upon the Church the duty of self-support and self-government, and no Church will be considered as fulfilling its calling that is not taking an active part in the evangelizing of the people in its area. Merely to pay for its own ministry and to maintain its own property is not to fulfil all the functions of a Church of Jesus Christ.

The privilege of self-control must depend on three conditions :

(1) The presence of an efficient ministry.

<sup>1</sup>N.B.—It is the wish of the Society to associate with its Missionaries, laymen (European and Native) who are active helpers in our work, and Native Ministers also, for purposes of assistance and advice in dealing with such funds as are allotted to Native work, whether these funds are raised locally or sent out as a general grant by this Committee ; and these will be appointed from time to time by the Committee on the nomination of the Local Committee.

(2) Material ability to support the ministry.

(3) The presence of laymen in the Church able to fill the various offices, and to manage the Church's finances.

To encourage the progress of a Church towards self-support and self-government, it is the policy of the Society from time to time to carve out of the larger Mission Circuits—which are really extensive Districts—groups of Churches to form a true Circuit, to which a Native Minister is appointed Superintendent. A Minister so appointed holds his own Quarterly Meeting and looks, not to the Missionary, but to his own Stewards for his stipend. Such a Circuit, to begin with, is classed as an aided Circuit, and receives a grant from the Local Committee, representing the General Committee. This grant diminishes according to scale until the Circuit becomes self-supporting, and is classed as such.

The District Synod will for the present fix the minimum stipend to be paid to a Native Minister in each Circuit, and will satisfy itself year by year that the amount fixed has been paid in full.

It will be expected of the Native Church that it will zealously follow up the Missionaries' efforts by supplementing their evangelistic work, and by taking over as early as possible the care of infant Churches which are the fruit of their joint labours.

It is the policy of the Society to make a frequent and careful survey of its whole field with a view to stimulating a larger measure of self-support among the Native Churches, and in order to ascertain what items of expenditure, especially in the provision and maintenance of property, should be considered the sole or chief responsibility of that Church.

#### THE NATIVE MINISTRY.

In the early stages of a Mission Church, the Native ministry is unavoidably related rather to the Mother Church than to the infant Church on the field. The Missionaries fix the stipends and pay the Ministers, on behalf of the Committee. This relation is only temporary, and never wholly satisfactory. In this position the Committee, through the Missionaries, is acting for the Native Church until she is able to undertake her own work. It is the policy of the Society in every step to consider the Church, and, both in fixing the stipends and directing the work of the Native Ministers, to move towards an early and smooth transference of the financial responsibility and general management to the Native Church.

The permanent relation of the Native ministry must be with the Native Church, and less intimately, but not less really, with the Mother Church.

The training of the ministry has been referred to above; another word is necessary. The Society is engaged in perfecting its arrangements for the efficient training of Native Workers of every grade and for every branch of the work. These arrangements include institutions of the following types:

(1) Elementary and Secondary Normal Schools for teachers, in which Government aid is sought wherever possible, and Government institutions are used, with the provision of Mission hostels.



(2) Bible Schools for the more complete equipment of village teachers and catechists.

(3) Vernacular Theological Schools for Evangelists.

(4) Advanced Theological Colleges, where a fairly high entrance examination is required and the lectures are given mostly in English, while the students receive practical training in their own vernaculars.

(5) Medical Schools.

Under 3, 4, and 5 the Society seeks to co-operate with other Protestant Societies wherever possible, e.g. in Bangalore United Theological College and in the Hankow Medical School.

#### OTHER WORKERS.

It is the policy of the Society to increase steadily the number of Native Workers, and to send out only the necessary minimum of British Missionaries. In the interests of efficiency and economy the Society is making a careful survey of the whole field with a view to ascertain what duties are now undertaken by British Missionaries which might without permanent loss be transferred to Native Assistants, and similarly what positions are now filled by Missionaries that might in the future be filled by Native Ministers. Having made the survey, the Committee will give effect to the necessary changes with as little delay as possible.

#### CONSOLIDATION AND EXPANSION.

It is the policy of the Society to make a careful survey of the field, District by District, with a view to ascertain whether each branch of the work is maintained in its due place and efficiency :

(1) The care of the Church, including the education of Christian children, whether religious, literary, or industrial.

(2) Evangelism, through the direct preaching of the Word, through education in Christian Schools, through literature, and through a ministry of healing and philanthropy.

It is the aim of the Society to complete its agencies in due proportions, and to make efficient its work on existing stations before any new ground is broken.

When this is done, the Society will turn its attention specially to those fields that have been left exclusively to its ministry, and to those communities that are most eagerly pressing into relation with the Christian Church.

These pressing duties, however, must not be regarded as more than wisely ordered steps towards a more distant goal, and the Society can never withdraw its ear from hearkening to the call that ever comes from the unoccupied regions beyond.

#### THE COMMITTEE AND THE CHURCH ON THE FIELD.

In the constitution of the Society the District is the administrative unit, and the Chairman and General Superintendent is the Society's chief representative in the group.

Accordingly, the general rule of the Society is that no action be taken in any District, and no grant made, on the judgement of any individual Missionary, but on the collective judgement of the Synod or

Local Committee ; or, between Synods, in cases of urgency, on the responsible judgement of the Chairman, acting representatively.

Acting on this principle, it has been possible to confer substantial powers of initiative on our Districts.

The formation of Provincial Synods in India and Ceylon has further strengthened the organization in those fields ; and from time to time the Committee will consider the revision of its policy with a view to giving a growing measure of self-control wherever, as in these fields, the Native Church is showing the qualities that should earn the larger privilege.

#### CO-OPERATION AND UNION.

It is the policy of the Society to co-operate with other Protestant Societies wherever such co-operation can secure a larger measure of efficiency and economy in the work undertaken. The following are branches of the work in which co-operation offers special advantage :

(1) Theological and normal training.

(2) The higher branches of education as an evangelizing or pastoral agency, e.g. the United Christian College, Madras ; the projected Union Colleges for Women in India.

(3) Industrial education.

(4) Evangelistic preaching in large cities and at special festivals.

(5) Hospital work and Medical Schools in large centres.

(6) Literature.

As to the complete union of the Churches on any field, the Society recognizes such union as the only right aim—ultimately—of all our work ; and has no desire on any field to perpetuate the unhappy divisions by which Western Christianity is rent asunder and enfeebled. On the other hand, hurried union might well lead to hurried and grievous disruption, while a more gradual approach of the several branches of the Church on the Mission Field might secure ultimately a more intelligent and stable basis of union. It is, moreover, of great importance to the young growing Churches of the Mission Field that they should for some time to come maintain their connexion with the Churches that under God have given them birth and nurture, and that they should cherish in perpetuity the consciousness of a Catholic rather than a national Christianity.

Under all the circumstances, it is the policy of the Society for the present to promote a close federation of the Churches, believing that on such lines progress towards ultimate union may wisely proceed.

## IX

### EBB AND FLOW OF THE INCOME

The Logic of Methodist Preaching and the Response in Missionary Activity—A Renaissance of Apostolic Christianity—Diagram of the Rise and Fall of Income—External Conditions affecting Income—The Antithesis of 'Home' and 'Foreign'—Missionary Outlay a principal Charge on the Resources of the Church—The Rise of the Income in Spite of adverse Influences—The Reform Agitation—The Evil of Strife within the Church—The effect of the Indian Mutiny—Increase of Interest followed by Depression—The Causes of Depression—The Stimulus of recent Progress.

THE opening chapters of this book went to show that Methodism is essentially a world-missionary force. Springing from a fresh and glowing experience, in the heart of England, of God's redeeming love toward mankind displayed in Jesus Christ, it reached out from its birth toward other lands. Its appeal to the individual was an application of its message to the race :

Come, all the world ;  
Come, sinner, thou !

Such was the logic of Methodist preaching ; each man was invited to a Saviour who ' by God's grace ' had ' tasted death for every man,' and each saved man, so soon as saved, was set on his way to convey that Saviour to every man who knew Him not. Holding this dispensation of the Gospel, John Wesley claimed to ' look upon all the world as ' his ' parish.' His Preachers offered in Christ's name what they themselves enjoyed, ' a free, present, and full salvation ' to every human soul. A movement of this nature could not be confined within local or national bounds. Spreading quickly through the land of its nativity, and originating in a time of growing traffic, Methodism spontaneously sent out its shoots and scattered its seeds on foreign shores. Within a generation it had taken root in the new world of North America, where British enterprise was already the dominant factor. Twenty years later

it found in Thomas Coke the God-chosen captain to organize its missionary energies, to nurse and develop its colonial societies, and to head its first systematic invasions of heathendom. By the time Coke's work was finished—after another thirty years—the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States, constituted by him under Wesley's direction, had grown into vigorous and fruitful independence, in stature already rivalling its mother; and the parent Methodism had pledged herself by the formation of the Connexional Missionary Society to the propagation of the Gospel amongst the heathen in West, East, and South.

We have witnessed to the Methodist people of a century ago how bravely they rose to the occasion and shouldered the missionary burden devolving upon them on Coke's departure; how 'in much proof of affliction the abundance of their joy, and their deep poverty, abounded' at this juncture 'unto the riches of their liberality.' They filled the empty Mission treasury at the time when the home funds were most straitened; they sent their children freely to lands far more strange and difficult of access, and into climates more dangerous, than any on which the Missionaries of to-day adventure. The outflow of devotion to the world-Gospel which marked the beginnings of the Society sprang from a great joy in the salvation of God, from a great love toward universal mankind and a poignant sense of the ruin attaching to its sin. In the years 1813-18 Wesleyan Methodism did not so much *found* the Missionary Society; it realized that it was a Missionary Society by its calling of God; it reorganized and taxed itself afresh for this vocation. Unto that new-born and feeble people, in its measurable resources 'less than the least of all' the Churches, 'was this grace given, to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.'

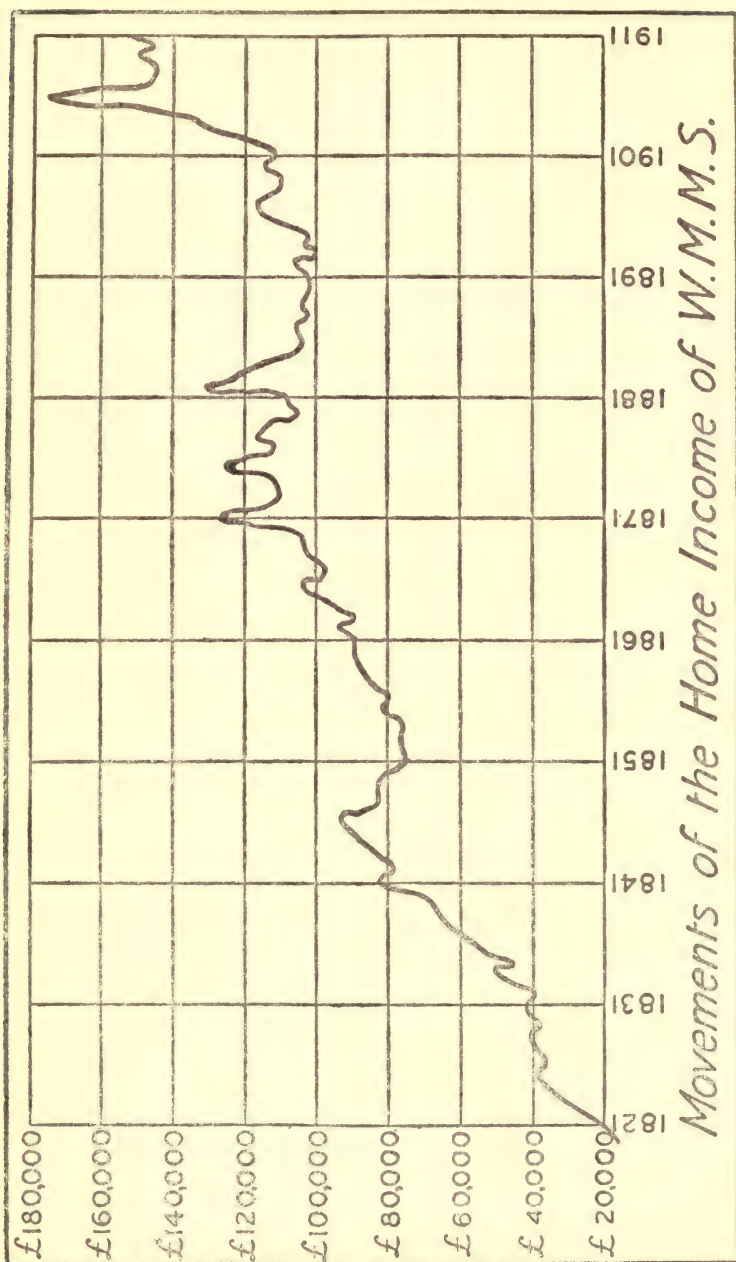
Methodism, in fact, is a thing inconceivable apart from its foreign missionary outlook and activity. In this respect, as well as in its warm response to the love of God and its aptness for testimony, the Evangelical Revival proved itself a Renaissance of Apostolic Christianity. The endeavours of early Methodism to reach the heathen were the irrepressible outcome of its interior life—the operation in its nature, and along the line of its opportunities, of the world-love of Jesus Christ which gave it birth; they were an instinctive and



congenital development—the ‘fruit’ that came inevitably of His people’s ‘abiding in’ Christ and of the ‘abiding of His words in’ them.

These things being so, the energy with which the foreign work of British Methodism is prosecuted shows it alive and true to itself. The missionary pulse—of Circuit, or Society, or Annual Conference—is an index to the Church’s state of heart. As the tides of zeal for the world’s salvation flow or ebb, the spiritual vigour, the Connexional framework, is seen to wax or wane. When the fires burn strongly on the domestic hearth of Methodism, their glow radiates to the ends of the earth; if those fires slacken, the chill is felt on a hundred Mission Fields. So vitally, in a Church’s subsisting by fellowship in Christ, do the members make one body, that our African or Indian provinces respond delicately to the touch of prayerful sympathy from England. Whatever new grace or enlargement of heart is given to us at home, its thrill pulsates, as by some wireless telegraphy of the Spirit, to the scattered groups of Methodist toilers and worshippers far overseas. Furthermore, since the hand obeys the heart, and *loving*, in such matters as these, prompts *giving*, our missionary contributions are the definite expression of our missionary zeal, and betray the heartiness or slackness of our evangelical faith; they show whether and to what extent we think our religion worth giving to the world. Translated into figures, this is as much as to say that the home income of the Missionary Society, estimated broadly and over a sufficient length of time, supplies in its rise or fall a gauge of the working energy of the home Church—a thermometer testing its spiritual temperature.

In the light of these reflections, it may be worth while to study the diagram which appears on the opposite page. Allowance should be made, to be sure, in the deductions drawn from it for many qualifying circumstances. The figure reached by the income at a given point may not represent the mind of the Church toward its foreign work at that exact moment. Money subscription to religious objects is in countless instances determined by habit and convention rather than immediate calculation; it is apt to become the stereotyped, unrevised result of the promptings and thinkings of an earlier stage in the giver’s experience. Too seldom does the Christian man ask himself, in meeting the Church collector: ‘How much



owest thou unto thy Lord on the account now presented, and in view of thy possessions at this date?' 'What did I give last year' is the familiar question; when that is answered, out comes the guinea or the half-crown, as the case may be, and conscience goes to sleep in the matter for another twelve months. The items which make up the claim of God's kingdom on our secular means are weighted too little in the spirit of the 'living sacrifice' which it is the Christian's office daily to lay upon the altar of God. Notwithstanding, it is in the long run a principle—good or bad, sound or defective, frankly or obscurely recognized—which governs Church finance. Faith loosens, unbelief tightens the purse-strings in the hands of God's stewards; and the total sum bestowed by the Methodist people, in men and money, for the carrying on of God's work among the heathen, in the ratio it bears to their total numbers and wealth, measures their sense of obligation to the Saviour of mankind.

There are external conditions affecting the fluctuation of the missionary revenue. National impoverishment, and seasons of commercial depression bringing misfortune on particular classes of the community, reduce the means of willing givers. One is surprised to find how little, in the main, the Missionary Society has suffered through causes of this nature. The curve of national income and that of missionary revenue, during the century, exhibit no general correspondence; they are governed by wholly different forces. The fund drooped indeed at the time of the commercial panic of 1827; its great arrest began in the later seventies, when for several years a heavy depreciation of monetary values went on, and British trade received a decided set-back. These, however, are exceptional coincidences. The Society was born at an epoch of unparalleled economic distress; its income mounted up unchecked through 'the hungry thirties' and forties; and Lancashire, suffering then severely from the cotton famine, took the lead in the Missionary Jubilee givings of 1863. On the other hand, the fund has shown the least elasticity during the last generation, in a stretch of years during which the wealth of England swelled beyond all precedent, and the rate of expenditure and style of living, in almost every class of the community, was constantly rising.

Other considerations bring us nearer to the heart of the

subject. There is a natural antagonism, often operating powerfully when unconfessed or perhaps unrealized, between local and distant claims—an opposition to which the modern antithesis of 'Foreign Missions' and 'Home Missions' has given too pointed and prejudicial an expression. To call a man a 'foreigner' is to hold him at arm's length and to allow him a secondary and dubious claim on one's regard. The antithesis was gloriously surmounted by the founders of the Missionary Society, who launched the Missionary Society when the growth of Methodism at home was most rapid, and the Circuits were full of costly aggression within and around their own borders. But as specialized agencies became necessary for domestic evangelism, and Home Missions grew into a separate department, adopting the methods of the foreign missionary appeal in order to gather their funds, a division and rivalry of interest ensued. The men foremost in the home missionary department were, most of them, zealous advocates of Foreign Missions, and deprecated the competition. Nevertheless it grew up in the minds of the people, favoured by the official language that came into vogue, and greatly stimulated by the trend of public sentiment in the closing decades of last century. 'The heathen at home' became a catchword of the day; the condition of our own city slums, the irreligion of the British masses, to the minds of many supplied an abundant reason for closing the door against the foreign missionary collector. The bitter cries at her own gates summoned the Church to new national and local philanthropies, whose pathetic and patent appeals preoccupied the attention of liberal givers. Yet at this very time the growing wealth lodged in Christian hands furnished a sufficiency for both demands; and, pointing in turn to the home and foreign duties of His people, our Lord virtually said, 'These ought ye to have done; and not to have left the other undone.' Of such 'leaving' of 'the other undone' Methodism in part was guilty during the quarter of a century of arrest in the missionary income (1876-1901). The world expansion of Christian charity was checked as the Church's sympathies were absorbed in the urgency of domestic appeals. Thousands of Methodists were not ashamed to say, 'I am not interested in Foreign Missions'; 'We have plenty to do at home—our own Circuit'; 'Our city Mission needs every penny we can give.' Meanwhile there was ringing in dull ears,



like the surf on the shore incessantly, and growing more articulate and insistent with the spread of knowledge and the increase of world intercourse, the cry from heathen lands, 'Come over and help us!' Answering that cry comes the mandate of the Redeemer, issued anew in this new dispensation of His kingdom, 'Go into all the world, and preach the Good News to the whole creation!' The response made to that entreaty and command measures the degree to which the true spirit of Jesus animates His people. Allowing for all disturbing contingencies, it remains true that, for a Church of the creed and the genius of Methodism, its work for world humanity is its dominating interest, and missionary outlay forms a principal charge upon its resources. None but a missionary Church can be 'filled unto all the fullness of God.'

Judged by this canon, for the first third of the century (1813-46) Wesleyan Methodism ran a most prosperous course. Its foreign missionary income grew continuously, at a rapid pace, from the figure of £5,500, at which Dr. Coke left it, to £94,000<sup>1</sup>—a multiplication of eighteenfold! This ascent began from the founding of the Society at a crisis of acute economic difficulty attending the close of the Napoleonic wars, when the Connexion was warned that its very existence was threatened by embarking on costly foreign adventures, and that bankruptcy stared it in the face. Amid this desperate plight the sum of £10,000 was raised in the first year by the District Auxiliaries established on the Leeds initiative, even before the Conference had sanctioned the formation of a General Missionary Society. This amount was trebled within ten years, and the Home Funds of the Connexion were saved through the enlargement of heart and the stimulus to liberality which the missionary campaign imparted to the whole body of Methodism. The improved financial state of the Church is evidenced by the fact that, whereas in 1813 the Contingent (now the Connexional) Fund, which meets the expenses of Connexional administration and itinerancy outside the ordinary Circuit liabilities, was nearly £5,000 in debt, and the Conference of that year was compelled to make a pitiful appeal to the

<sup>1</sup> Foreign contributions are excluded from the totals of income stated in this chapter; so are legacies, grants from the Centenary (1839), and similar occasional funds, with other incidental items going to make up the Society's gross revenue. We are concerned only with the annual proceeds regularly accruing from the Home Church in the shape of collections, subscriptions, and donations.

Chapel Trustees of Methodism on that account, in 1823 its Treasurer reports a balance of £1,000 in hand ! It is clear that 'giving' to the furtherance of God's work abroad 'doth not impoverish' the Church at home. During the same decade, the Society membership in Great Britain and Ireland advanced from 190,000 to 241,000 ; on the Foreign Stations, from 17,000 to 31,000.

After nearing the level of £40,000 in 1825, the income remained fluctuating about this point for six or seven years consequent. This check synchronized with the dislocation of trade and shipwrecks of fortune culminating in the 'black year' of 1827. This was a time, besides, of extreme political tension and disturbance, marked by the Catholic Emancipation of 1829 (a subject on which Methodists were divided in opinion), issuing in the Reform Bill of 1832. Such periods are mostly inimical to religious progress. For all this, the numerical advance of the Societies at home and abroad steadily continued, and in 1833 our total Church constituency in Great Britain and Ireland amounted to 303,000. By this date (the year of Richard Watson's reappointment to office, followed by his death) the missionary income had resumed with speed its forward march.

A significant dip in the income-curve is noticeable in 1835. This was the year of the Warrenite Agitation, which to a grievous extent occupied the attention and absorbed the energies of our Methodist leaders just then. Nearly a third of the printed pages of the *Minutes of Conference* for 1835 are filled with this unhappy subject. The pause was, however, brief ; and through the later thirties the revenue mounted up by leaps and bounds. Its growth was stimulated by the emancipation of the West Indian slaves, in effecting which our grandfathers had taken a strenuous part, and by the glorious success reported from the Friendly Islands, in the South Seas. With slight interruption, progress continued until the year 1846, when the home income of the Missionary Society reached what was for those days the noble figure of £94,000. This for long remained its maximum. The Church membership was at that date 369,000. Wesleyan Methodists, it appears, were then contributing a little over 5s. *per caput per annum* to their Foreign Missions.

The conflict of 1835 was the precursor of a far more radical

and disastrous contention in Methodism, known as 'The Reform Agitation.' In the Conference, and up and down the Connexion, the storm had been raging for years before it reached its crisis in the expulsion at the Conference of 1849 of the ringleaders of disturbance; and it took several years thereafter to subside. This is not the place to discuss the justice of the sentence passed on James Everett and his companions, or the ecclesiastical bearings of the question at issue and the line of conduct pursued by the parties to that calamitous struggle. What we have to note is its crippling effect on the world-work of Methodism. In five years (1846-51) the missionary income shrank by nearly a fifth of its amount—from £94,000 to £78,000—while the Church membership (in the United Kingdom) was reduced from 369,000 to 323,000. The diminution of membership continued until 1854, when it sank to 283,000—a figure surpassed twenty-one years earlier; but the Missionary Fund already showed signs of recuperation.

Methodism lost ground in that time of schism and scandal that it has not yet recovered; its spiritual prestige and national force appeared to have been permanently damaged. Church disruptions invariably leave the severed fractions less than the whole. But in the day of calamity the missionary interest proved a steadying and saving influence for the Church. Not a few under temptation to leave 'the Old Body' rallied to it in support of its foreign work. The thought of 'the Missions' being shattered was intolerable; and when the cry 'Stop the supplies!' touched this holy cause, it provoked an indignation which protected the Missionary Society, and in doing so materially helped to preserve Methodism itself. It was noticed at the time that few hearty friends of the Foreign Missions left the mother Church, although the shafts of the enemy were directed against the officers of the Society as their chief mark. While the missionary income was inevitably lowered during the eight years of Connexional decrease, at the end of this period the average level of missionary contribution had risen from 5s. 1d. to 5s. 5½d.

*China* was boldly added to the cares of the Society in this distressful time; and, as so often happens in Christian experience, the new burden proved a buoyancy; the Society found, as in the days of its beginning, its task grow more practicable by reason of its added magnitude. Special contributions for



China flowed in to replenish the general treasury. The recovery of the Mission Fund was the harbinger of the favourable reaction, the renewal of vigour and hope which before long was manifest in all the activities of Wesleyan Methodism. Not till 1861, however, did the missionary home income rise again to the level touched fifteen years before ; it still remained short of £100,000.

The secession Churches of Methodism in course of time set up their own Missionary Societies, which they have maintained at much cost and with gratifying success. They showed themselves thus of the true breed. But the results obtained by these divided efforts have fallen far short of what we might have achieved in unbroken union. We shall see in later pages, as we survey the Mission Fields in turn, how evil was the fruit reaped from domestic strife in remote heathen lands, from the curtailment of means and the retrenchment of outlay this mischief entailed. In West Africa 'Retreat' was sounded at the moment when the forces on the field were ready for a great advance. For our South African Missionaries the check was hardly less disastrous, coinciding as it did with the close of the succession of the Kaffir wars, which had scattered the converts and destroyed much of the Mission property. Supplies of men and money had to be withheld at the moment when liberal reinforcements were most demanded. The years of discouragement and hard apprenticeship were prolonged for the Indian Missions. The commencement of work in China was delayed and precious time wasted, until George Piercy almost forced the hand of Methodism in 1851-52, at the juncture when the financial outlook of Bishopsgate was most forbidding. Those who are tempted to stir up strife in the Church of God should count the cost before they begin. It is not so much their own credit and interests, but the health of the whole body of Christ, that is endangered, and the advance of the kingdom of God throughout the world. The salvation of souls in many climes may be at stake in the action of men at home who magnify partisan opinions into great principles, and are inflamed by personal resentments and ambitions. The members of a missionary Church are under heavy bonds to keep the peace amongst themselves. These observations apply both to the reforming and conservative parties in ecclesiastical controversies.



Out of so much evil the providence of God evolved a measure of good. The straits to which the Reform Agitation had brought the Missionary Society constrained it to look at the question of colonial independence earlier than it might otherwise have done, and to make bold ventures in this direction. Happily, in John Beecham at home, in William B. Boyce on the Australian field, and in leaders of scarcely less mark directing affairs in the North American Districts, Methodism possessed statesmen of insight and courage equal to the occasion. The Affiliated Conferences of Australasia and of Canada and Eastern British America were formed in the years 1854-56. Their creation relieved the mother Church of the administrative cares, and gradually of the financial burdens, imposed by her Mission, colonial and heathen, in the South Seas and on the North American continent.

In following the income-curve drawn on page 185 we find, after the beginnings of the Society, two periods of well-marked and steady upward movement. On the earlier of these, extending from 1831 to 1846, we have already commented. The second covered an equal length of time—from 1856 to 1871—at which last-named date the home income amounted to £124,000, exceeding by 25 per cent. the high-water mark of a quarter of a century before. Meantime the Church membership of Wesleyan Methodism in the United Kingdom had risen from a total of 282,000 to 367,000 (the point at which it stood before the Reform Agitation twenty-five years earlier); the average contribution to Foreign Missions had therefore increased from 5s. 8d. to close upon 6s. 6d. per member. Several events of the later fifties go to account for the renewed prosperity of the Missionary Society commencing in 1856. Chief among these we should place the wave of revival, most marked in Scotland and Ireland, which lifted the evangelical Churches on both sides of the Atlantic about this time. The launching of our Missions to China (1852) and to Italy (1861), in each case answering to a clear providential call, and effected with skilful management as well as daring faith, undoubtedly helped the Society's funds. Popular sympathies were touched, and new friends were enlisted in various quarters, by these new crusades. Mere novelty is no legitimate ground of appeal in the work of God; but when His providence in the government of the nations opens before all eyes fresh doors,

and when (as in the case of George Piercy) the Spirit of God simultaneously stirs to heroic endeavour some chosen soul, a believing Church cannot gainsay such signs, however scanty may seem to be the means for obeying them.

While the influences just described were at work, the Indian Mutiny of 1857 aroused the conscience of England to its duty towards its great Eastern Dependency. Behind the commercial and political relations which had so strangely bound together England and Hindustan there were seen to exist deep-lying obligations hitherto but little considered. The Mission work that had been carried on by the home Churches in a somewhat perfunctory and grudging spirit, with impatience at the slow progress and small returns reported from the field, assumed a grave importance. The Church was compelled to think and pray about India as never before. Thus the troubles of the Mutiny proved the birth-pangs of a happier era for British Government—and for Christian Missions—in that country. Our scanty Methodist forces were increased, and their equipment improved. The attention and solicitude given to Indian matters from this time forward constituted an important factor in the stimulus received by the Missionary Societies during the later fifties and the sixties of last century.

With some curious fluctuations the income gravitated downwards from 1871 for more than twenty years, until in 1894 it had sunk to the level of £100,000, reached thirty years before. The causes of this deep and long-continuing depression in the foreign missionary zeal of Methodism have been set forth, so far as we are able to ascertain them, in Chapters VI. and VIII. These causes we should be inclined to set in the following order of importance: the current of materialism which began strongly to affect English thought in the later seventies; the contraction of British international sympathies, and the greater concentration upon the social questions of home politics; the unsettlement in theology, especially the broader views respecting final destiny coming into vogue, which weakened the motives arising from the apprehension of the wholesale perdition of the heathen—a conviction not sufficiently replaced by quickened loyalty to Jesus Christ and deepened concern for the spiritual uplifting of humanity; the diminution of national wealth in the later seventies—this quite a temporary circumstance—as respects our own Missionary Society; the

absorbing interest felt by Methodists during the later eighties and nineties in 'the Forward Movement' at home, and in the needs of our city populations; the Missionary Controversy of 1889-90; the premature loss by death of powerful missionary advocates, and the abnormally frequent changes in the Directorate at Bishopsgate. Through the long period of decline in the Foreign Missionary Fund, Home Methodism had slowly increased its Church membership, from the 367,000 registered for the United Kingdom in 1871 to close upon 460,000 in 1894—a rate of growth not much exceeding that of the general population. The scale of missionary contribution had therefore fallen from 6s. 6d. for each member at the earlier date to 4s. 7d. at the latter—a rate considerably below that of half a century earlier.

In 1894 the Foreign Missionary Fund had 'touched bottom.' From this point its third great upward movement began, taking effect, first slowly, then more rapidly, from 1901 onwards. It is to be noticed that this turn of the tide coincided with the appointment and first observance through the Connexion of the annual Day of Intercession for Foreign Missions. The conditions of the time were, in several respects, unpropitious for improvement in the Missionary Fund. Severe commercial depression marked the middle nineties; and Methodism was taxing itself heavily for its modern city Missions. With the year 1898 the Twentieth Century Fund came into the field, making its unprecedented demand on the purse of Methodism. Yet it was in the opening years of the century, while the pressure of the Million Guineas Fund, and of the further home expenditure consequent upon it, was most felt that the Missionary Society's income rose (in 1901-06) from £110,000 to £168,000, at a rate unexampled since the early days of the Society. The Nottingham Conference of 1906 was distinguished by a surprising outburst of enthusiasm for this cause, under the influence of which, in a morning's session, the accumulated debt of the Society was swept away and many thousand pounds were added to the yearly income. In subsequent years the point reached by this freshet of liberality has not been maintained; but the fund has been lifted to a permanently higher level, and the indications are favourable for a steady advance from the Centenary onward.

Recent progress on the Mission Field has powerfully



stimulated faith and zeal at home. Nothing has encouraged the friends of Methodist Missions in the last twenty years more than the victories won for the Gospel in the Transvaal and Rhodesia. Here a work has been accomplished for God as wide in its operation and rich in its results as anything that the early history of Methodism records. The turn of events in China has in the last decade drawn eager attention and sympathy toward that mysterious land and people ; our own Mission has of late made rapid strides both in South and Central China. A reaping has begun for Methodism in India, especially amongst the outcaste populations, which repays the labour spent on what had long seemed a hard and unyielding soil. A stir of life and hope is now animating the whole Farther East ; and in Africa a great crisis of peril and opportunity has come about, which every intelligent Christian is bound to recognize. The Edinburgh Conference of 1910 served to gather up and give commanding expression to the demands upon the Church of the present world situation on behalf of the kingdom of God. If Methodism has shown herself somewhat sluggish and preoccupied in regard to the present-day movements in world history, she is not asleep ; there are eyes amongst us ' lifted up ' at Christ's call to ' look upon the field ' so visibly ' white unto harvest.' The fact that our foreign missionary income since 1894 has increased by nearly 50 per cent. is evidence that the Spirit of Christ has not forsaken us, though we must admit that the increased income is far from being worthy of our professions and resources, and compares unfavourably with the sacrifices of our people made for this sovereign cause a hundred or even forty years ago. The average contribution of our Church membership in the United Kingdom amounted in 1911 to less than 5s. 6d. each, a sum about a shilling more than the estimate for 1894 and a shilling less than that arrived at for 1871. Judged by this test, we are still behind our fathers in zeal for the world's conversion.

Comparison of the several Districts of Home Methodism in respect of their missionary givings during the century reveals local idiosyncrasies not easy to account for. Lancashire, which came nobly to the front at the Jubilee of 1863, in the midst of her own distress through the cotton famine, has been of all the provincial areas the most consistent in missionary devotion, measured by this test. The Manchester, Bolton,



and Liverpool Districts felt least the two great depressions centring in 1849 and 1889 ; they have gone steadily forward, with slight occasional retrogressions, and have raised their missionary income by about 50 per cent. in the last thirty years. And Lancashire Methodism has her reward in the wonderful growth and manifold fruitfulness of the Manchester Mission. Had all England kept pace with this county, the Society would have been far better off than it is to-day. London Methodism suffered heavily during the times of stress ; it has retrieved its position, almost doubling its givings during the last generation. Cardiff, with her greatly increased resources, and Portsmouth, have marched forward in like fashion. The Midlands—including Birmingham, Nottingham and Derby, and Sheffield—and Newcastle, in the far north, exhibit a similar, though not so pronounced, a record of advance ; the two first of these Districts have quickened their pace notably of recent years. Yorkshire tells another tale. The districts of York, Hull, Leeds, Halifax and Bradford bravely withstood the storm of sixty years ago, Leeds substantially increasing her subscription in face of the Reform Agitation. Since then Yorkshire has been marking time ; the total income of the Society accruing from the four Districts named is actually less to-day than it was in 1878. Our Church membership over this area has remained the same, within a thousand or so, for this thirty-three years past, while the population and wealth have grown enormously. York, however, it must be allowed, still heads the list of Districts in its ratio of missionary-giving to membership (8s. 9d. *per caput*), Liverpool and Manchester coming next. Cornwall reached her high-water mark so far back as 1848, and gives less to Foreign Missions than she did sixty years ago. Emigration, and the shrinkage of her mineral wealth, account, we must suppose, for much of this backwardness. Her neighbours of the south-west—Plymouth and Devonport, and Exeter—have meantime gone forward, if too slowly ; and Bristol (with Bath) has made better, though not very signal, progress in her contribution to the missionary exchequer.

## PART II

### AMERICA







CAN





ADA

QUEBEC

NEW  
BRUNSWICK

WOODSTOCK

FREDERICTON

PRINCE  
EDWARD  
ISLAND

CHARLOTTETOWN

ST. JOHN'S

NEW WALLACE

ANTIGONISH

NOVA SCOTIA

WINDSOR

HALIFAX

SELBORNE

BOSTON

ATLANTIC

OCEAN



# I

## THE BIRTH OF AMERICAN METHODISM.

Methodism and the Colonial Movement—Emigrants to the West—The English 'Plantations'—The Wesleys and America—George Whitefield—The first Methodist Society in America—Philip Embury and Captain Webb in New York—Robert Strawbridge in Maryland—An Ecclesiastical Question—Appeals to John Wesley—Boardman and Pilmoor—Francis Asbury—Thomas Rankin, 'General Superintendent'—The first American Conference at Philadelphia—Loyalists and the War of Independence.

THE century that witnessed the rise of Methodism witnessed also the founding of England's colonial empire, and the beginning of that expansion of the British race overseas which is perhaps the most signal world movement of modern history. The North American plantations had been commenced much earlier, but their existence remained precarious, until the struggle with France for colonial ascendancy was decided in the middle of the eighteenth century. The year 1757, when Quebec was captured in the West and the victory of Plassey achieved in the East, determined the imperial destiny of England, giving her secure dominion in America and Asia. By the time that North America, Australasia, and South Africa opened their gates to the pioneers of British enterprise and to the overspill of British population, Methodism in its youthful energy and missionary ardour was ready for world adventure. She offered herself to attend the voyager and to seek the wanderer in lonely backwoods and on distant frontiers, while she set her heart upon the conversion of the heathen and the emancipation of the slave, wherever she could reach them.

While we do not forget nor belittle the work done by other English Churches on the colonial fields, we claim for Methodism and for the Wesleyan Missionary Society a place of special importance on this arena. In Greater Britain she has played a greater part than at home, finding there freer scope for her energies, and coming to the task of the evangelization of the colonies in the



freshness of her powers. Whether the work of service is to be valued by the proportion it bears to the powers and resources of those who render it, or by the timeliness and suitability of its rendering, on either of these accounts the England Overseas—in America, in Australia and New Zealand, in South Africa—owes an unparalleled debt, under God, to the testimony and the toils of the Methodist missionary pioneers. The nature of that debt may be indicated in words borrowed from an observer who was intimately acquainted with the course of English colonization a century ago, and could estimate and compare the religious forces that operated in the working of early colonial society. After appraising the contributions made by the Anglican, the Roman Catholic, and Scottish Churches to the higher welfare of British immigrants, this writer introduces another Church, which alone in the colonies performs the functions of a Church :

I mean [he says] that of the Wesleyan Methodists . . . which comprehends the largest and takes care of the smallest objects of a Church . . . It does not wait till there is a call for its services ; it leads colonization ; it penetrates to settlements where there is no religion at all, and gathers into its fold many of those whom the other Churches utterly neglect. This Church alone never acts in the principle that anything is good enough for the colonies. Whether it sends forth its clergy to the backwoods of North America, the solitary plains of South Africa, the wild bush of Tasmania and Australia, or the forests and fern-plains of New Zealand, it sends men of devoted purpose and first-rate ability, and selects its Missionaries with as much care as the Propaganda of Rome. It rules them with an authority that is always in full operation, with a far-stretching arm and a hand of steel. . . . Above all, it seeks and picks up and cherishes and humanizes the basest and most brutish of the population. It is the antagonist, and frequently the conqueror, of drunkenness, which is the chief bane of low colonial life. It makes war upon idleness, roguery, dirt, obscenity, and debauchery. . . . It is truly a colonizing Church ; it knows that in colonization, as you sow, so you reap ; it acts in this belief with vigour and constancy of purpose, and with a degree of success that is admirable, considering that its first " century " was only held the other day.<sup>1</sup>

Though the thirteen colonies on the American mainland which formed the ' United States ' broke away from the mother

<sup>1</sup> This is the pronouncement of the prominent colonial publicist, Edward Gibbon Wakefield, of the middle of last century. See his *View of the Art of Colonization* (1849) pp. 162-165. The comparison that Gibbon Wakefield makes is pointed more sharply in order to provoke to jealousy the Church of England, which up to this time had been a careless mother toward the colonies.

country, they were nevertheless her children, and had received from her their religious as well as political nurture. The planting of American Methodism was distinctly the act of John Wesley and the British Conference; its history for the first eighteen years (1766-84) is a part of the history of Methodist Missions. The release of the States from the government of the British Crown brought about, through Wesley's wise and well-devised renunciation, the settling of the Methodist Church of the Republic upon its own feet. But so far as the subject is pursued in this book (up to 1784) it belongs to the story of colonial Methodism.

The strata of society supplying the swarms of emigrants who have left the British shores during the two last centuries were those in which Methodism at home had chiefly flourished, viz. the humbler middle-classes and the more intelligent and vigorous of the industrials—farmers, mechanics, and small tradesmen. To these must be added the soldiers, engaged during those war-like times in every quarter of the globe, amongst whom were found a notable contingent of Methodists, uncommonly bold and active in their testimony. These were in many instances the first to hold Methodist meetings abroad, and to make, or to suggest, openings for missionary work. To every colony pious immigrants carried the knowledge and savour of the Gospel. Their Methodist fellowship drew the exiles together on the new shores, and enabled them to build a spiritual home for their children. Leaders and Local Preachers were forthcoming amongst them, and were spontaneously chosen; they instituted Societies, and reproduced amidst the solitude and hardships of their life in the wilderness the discipline and modes of devotion practised in the motherland. The simple and popular forms of Church life introduced by John Wesley proved themselves well suited to the conditions of colonial society. Methodism developed in its laity an individual initiative, a constructive instinct and aptitude in the matters of God's kingdom, resembling that which the British colonist exhibits in the political sphere. Religious comradeship sweetened the banishment of the settlers, and fortified them against their new and strange temptations. United by the love of Christ, and singing the familiar hymns which spoke of the world's Saviour, our people on distant shores felt their hearts yearn toward the wild heathen folk

around them. Their letters home pleaded that messengers of Christ should be sent, not only to minister to themselves and their fellow colonists, but especially to the benighted pagans, of whose misery they were witnesses, giving assurance that they were 'standing fast in the Lord' and would further the sending of His Gospel to the regions beyond them.

Such, for the most part, were the humble beginnings of our great colonial Churches and Conferences, which now in their collective numbers and strength far exceed the mother Methodism of these little islands. Our Church has grown with the growth of the daughter nations of Britain. Methodism on colonial soil has run a course resembling that of the British Empire itself. Its extension in most instances has come about, to begin with, through sporadic private adventure, this being followed by local association and the formation of companies requiring the control and inviting the fostering care of the mother country, which has protected and promoted its dependencies, nursing them to adult nationhood. In this immense political development, which has surrounded England with a circle of young and strenuous people of her own blood, owing her a free but dutiful allegiance, Methodism, by the side of the other Churches, has played a vital part by infusing into their nascent life a religious spirit, and inspiring them with that faith in God and in the future wherein lie the springs of moral vigour, by weaving strands of piety into the ties of kinship and patriotism, by prompting goodwill and Christian compassion toward the Native inhabitants, and seeking to guard them from the exploitation and the fatal corruption which a commercial colonization brings in its train.

The English 'Plantations' (as they used to be called) in North America commenced with the colony settled on the banks of the James River by Sir Walter Raleigh, who had already taken possession, on behalf of England, of the territory stretching from Florida to Canada, naming this vast unexplored region 'Virginia,' in honour of Queen Elizabeth. The *Mayflower* landed her company of Puritan exiles on Plymouth Rock in 1620, and the New England settlements began, spreading out from the vicinity of Boston. New Amsterdam (renamed 'New York'), with the Hudson valley, was ceded by the Dutch in 1662. The Quaker colony of Pennsylvania originated



in 1682. Rhode Island was an asylum for the Baptists. Out of Raleigh's Virginia were carved successively, in 1632, Maryland (named after Henrietta Maria, Queen of Charles I), providing an asylum for Roman Catholics, as New England for Dissenters; Carolina, where Huguenots and Swedes formed a home (the name recalls Charles II), in 1663; and Georgia (named from the Hanover Georges), so late as 1732, the last enumerated furnishing an asylum for the Salzburgers, a company of Protestant refugees from Austria. These heterogeneous States were drawn together by a common resistance to the oppression of the British Government, and were welded into a nation by the War of Independence (1774-83). The difference between the Puritan, democratic North and the Anglican, aristocratic, and Cavalier South, on which the history of the United States turns, was already pronounced in the middle of the eighteenth century, and affected the Methodism of the colonies from the outset. Our Church had, in fact, two distinct centres of origin, associated with the two poles of colonial life.

Sixteen years before the Declaration of Independence the seeds of Methodism had sown themselves across the Atlantic. At the crisis of the war, refusing to be extruded as an alien element, it struck its roots into the American soil, and identified itself with the nation born out of that distressful struggle. When the strife was ended American Methodism was found disciplined to sacrifice and ripe for self-direction; it was prepared to work out its own destiny, neither helped nor checked any longer from the mother country. John Wesley knew how to resign power, as well as how to assert and wield it. His statesmanship never showed to greater advantage than when he commissioned Thomas Coke, under an ordination by his own hands that was virtually Episcopal, to found the Methodist Church of America. That act of ecclesiastical policy has proved as fruitful as it was courageous; 'Wisdom is justified of her children.'

John and Charles Wesley had themselves laboured in Georgia within a few years of the founding of the colony (1735-38), the former as parish Minister of Savannah and Missionary to the Red Indians under the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel; the latter as Secretary to the colonial Governor and founder, General Oglethorpe. John Wesley started a 'Society'



in his parish, the formation of which (in April, 1736) he spoke of subsequently as 'the second rise of Methodism.' It was an advance, in certain features, upon the Oxford Methodism of 1729, and an experiment towards the mature Methodism of ten years later. Wesley left behind him a handful of converts and a number of friends and admirers amongst the colonists, German and English, for whom he had laboured at the cost of much persecution. The heathen he had scarcely touched; in fact, the early Georgian Methodism was stillborn. The two brothers were strangers themselves to the secret of the Gospel, and the little Society they had created was without the breath of evangelical life. On the day of his landing in England (February 1, 1738), John Wesley records it as the sum of his experience that 'I, who went to America to convert others, was never myself converted to God'; and though later he modified this severe judgement, it is certain that, with all his striving after righteousness and zeal for God, he knew not then the way of faith and could not teach it. In his fellow voyagers, the unlettered Moravians, the Oxford theologian found men who had learned Christ to better purpose than himself. Their visit to Georgia was a part of the personal discipline through which John and Charles Wesley had to pass; it belongs to the preparation for their life mission. The Methodism of America has no direct connexion with the sojourn of the Wesleys themselves upon that continent.

It was George Whitefield who brought the Evangelical Revival to America, setting sail for Georgia on his first voyage just as his friend John Wesley was returning, early in the year 1738. Three years before this he had received the new life, which touched his soul and tongue with heavenly fire. The 'Great Awakening' in New England, under Jonathan Edwards' ministry, had recently commenced; Whitefield's oratory fanned the flame into a conflagration which swept through the land. He preached far and wide among the colonials, gathering vast assemblies, and in many places moving the whole population. Founding no Societies of his own, and ministering in Anglican and Dissenting communities alike, he quickened all the Churches. It is said that the Nonconformists of New England gained an accession of thirty or forty thousand members through Whitefield's coming. The Presbyterians of the Middle States owed still more to the help he brought them.

Though a clergyman, Whitefield was often, as in England, excluded from Anglican pulpits, and the mother Church—whose canons, to be sure, he treated lightly enough—benefited least by his services. Dr. Abel Stevens, the historian of the Methodist Episcopal Church, says that ‘the Protestantism of the United States has taken its subsequent character from’ the revival of which Whitefield was the chief instrument. Seven times he visited the colonies—in 1738, 1739–41, 1744–48, 1751–52, 1754–55, 1763–65, 1769–70—spending there a third of the period of his ministry. There he died, at Newburyport, not far from Boston, on September 30, 1770, at the age of fifty-five.

Many scattered converts of Whitefield’s found a home subsequently in Wesleyan Methodism. Wherever Wesley’s itinerants came upon his traces they found ears open for their message, and memories of blessing ready to be revived.

Though Whitefield did not organize the results of his labours, he prepared the way for Wesley’s itinerants. When he descended into his American grave, they were already on his track. (Stevens.)

The wide popular success so speedily won by the first generation of Methodist Preachers in the United States must be attributed in no small degree to the fact that Whitefield had prepossessed the people in their favour. His captivating eloquence and fervent evangelism had created the atmosphere of good-will, and called forth the spirit of expectation which Wesley’s emissaries found awaiting them. John Wesley’s last letter to George Whitefield referred to the young Missionaries whom he had just sent across the water, and commended them to his fatherly regard :

I must beg of you to supply my lack of service by encouraging our Preachers as you judge best, who are as yet comparatively young and inexperienced, by giving them such advice as you think proper ; and, above all, by exhorting them not only to love one another, but, if it be possible, as much as lies in them, to live peaceably with all men.<sup>1</sup>

Whitefield met Boardman and Pilmoor at Philadelphia not long after their landing, and gave them the kindest encouragement. It is pleasant to think of Whitefield thus blessing

<sup>1</sup> This was subsequent to the episode of Grenville’s notorious ‘Stamp Act.’ The spirit of revolt against the colonial policy of George III and the Tory Government was fast rising in the States.

Wesley's people before his death. He saluted in these humble pioneers his true successors, and the great Church of the future which was to inherit his own labours in America.

The first Methodist Society in America, of the proper order, was formed of a company of German-Irish emigrants who landed at New York in the year 1760. This party came from a district near to Limerick occupied by Protestant refugees, who had been driven from their native homes in the Rhenish Palatinate fifty years earlier, through the invasion of Louis XIV of France, and had been settled here by the English Government.<sup>1</sup> Left uncared for and without a German pastor, the Palatines had lapsed from their religious character until the Methodist itinerants reached them, when many of them received the Gospel readily, and a striking reformation took place.<sup>2</sup>

Amongst the Palatine Methodists was Philip Embury, born in 1728 or thereabouts, who was a carpenter by trade, a man of fairly good education, and endowed with gifts of speech and leadership. Converted to God on Christmas Day, 1752, he had been a Local Preacher and class-leader for some years before his migration. He sailed from Limerick in June, 1760, with his newly married wife, Mary Switzer. They were accompanied by a number of relatives and neighbours, including Paul Heck and his wife, Barbara (née Ruckle), the latter Philip Embury's cousin. A second detachment of the Palatine people appears to have followed the first in 1765. As so often proves the case, change of habitation was followed by spiritual declension. Embury—evidently a diffident man—failed to let his light shine in the strange surroundings, until he was roused by the reproaches of Barbara Heck, who, finding a card-party of the Palatine circle at play, seized the pack and flung them into the fire, shaming the gamblers for their evil ways. At once she sought her cousin (who was not amongst the players), crying: 'Brother Embury, you must preach to us here, or we shall all go to hell, and God will require our blood at your hand.' After some demur Embury began to preach in his own house, the first congregation consisting of five persons. But saving

<sup>1</sup> Wesley estimates the Palatine colony in Ireland at 110 families; 3,000 of these people had been planted in the American colonies so early as 1710. The total number transported from Germany was above 6,000—most of them in a state of destitution.

<sup>2</sup> See John Wesley's *Journal*, June 23, 1758; July 9 and 10, 1760; and June 4, 1762.



impressions were made, and a little Methodist Society was forthwith commenced.

The rumour of the preaching brought round Embury's cottage in Barrack Street<sup>1</sup> a number of people scattered through the city, many of them unknown to each other, who had previously come under Methodist influence in England or Ireland, including soldiers from the neighbouring British garrison. Embury's 'talents were not of the highest; he was plain, practical, artless, useful. His sermons were generally steeped with tears.' He was, in truth, one of those simple, humble, tender-hearted men through whose agency God is pleased not unfrequently to do the greatest things. Amongst the earliest adherents of the New York Society were Richard Sause and Charles White, former Dublin Methodists, who became pillars of the little church. The company quickly grew too large for Embury's workshop, and a more commodious room was hired in the neighbourhood.

Here the congregation was surprised, and half alarmed, by the appearance amongst them one Sunday of a British officer in full regimentals. He showed a portly and commanding figure, and wore a green patch which concealed the loss of his right eye. This proved to be Captain Thomas Webb, barrack-master of the troops stationed at Albany, the capital of the State, who, hearing of the Methodists in New York, had come to seek them out. Captain Webb had been brought to God under John Wesley's preaching in Bristol not long before this time, and was now a Local Preacher. In this 'man of fire,' as Wesley called him, force and fluency of speech were joined with fervour and resolution of character, and he carried a powerful influence for good wherever he went.<sup>2</sup> Captain Webb's assistance put another aspect on Methodist affairs in New York. Soldiers and civilians flocked to hear this extraordinary preacher, and their curiosity soon gave place to awe. John Adams, Washington's successor in the Presidency of the Republic, listened to him with admiration, and described him as 'the old soldier, one of the most eloquent men I ever heard; he reaches the imagination and touches the passions very well,

<sup>1</sup> The site of Embury's house is covered by Park Place, near the City Hall of New York.

<sup>2</sup> Webb was a soldier of distinction, and a favourite with his comrades. He lost his eye at the siege of Louisburg, and took part in the capture of Quebec under General Wolfe, when he was severely wounded in the right arm.



and expresses himself with great propriety.' Again a larger preaching-room had to be found. A rigging-loft was secured in Horse-and-Cart Street (now William Street), sixty feet long by eighteen wide, which was furnished for Divine worship and served to hold a considerable congregation. That place was long revered as the cradle of American Methodism. This was in the year 1767.

But by another year the rigging-loft was too small, and steps were taken—again at the instigation of Barbara Heck—to house the Church in a fabric of its own. 'Wesley Chapel'—probably the first edifice thus designated<sup>1</sup>—was built on land purchased for the Society, where Old John Street Church stands to-day—the mother sanctuary of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The effort was taxing for a struggling community only two years old, but the poverty of the New York Methodists 'abounded unto the riches of their liberality.' Those who could give little in money helped the building with the labour of their hands. Captain Webb headed the subscription-list, and made collections for the object wherever he preached, and many leading citizens contributed to the building fund. Wesley sent money, books, and a clock.

At this date the population of New York amounted to something between twenty and twenty-five thousand. There were seventeen churches in the city—three belonging to the Anglican and three to the Dutch Reformed Communion; two Lutheran and one German Reformed Church; two Presbyterian churches, and five of other denominations, amongst which the Congregationalists were not then counted. The religious complexion of New York differed notably from that of the adjacent New England States. Methodism found in its mingled and rapidly growing population a favourable field; it entered much later the Puritan colonies to the north, and made in them comparatively slow progress.

Captain Webb did not confine his energies to New York; in respect of public influence and the fruitfulness of his labours he must be regarded as the father of American Methodism, at least in its northern branch. He preached over a considerable area, extending from Long Island to Philadelphia. In the latter city, where Whitefield's ministrations had been frequent

<sup>1</sup> John Wesley forbade his name to be thus used by Methodists under his control in England.

and most acceptable, a Methodist Society was speedily established, and Philadelphia became the second important centre for Wesley's itinerants. Embury remained attached to Wesley Chapel, and nursed the growing flock which gathered there.

Great movements often commence through a common impulse arising simultaneously in distant centres. While Embury and Webb were preaching and forming Societies in New York and its neighbourhood, unknown to them another Irish Local Preacher was at work amongst the settlers of Maryland. This was Robert Strawbridge, a farmer-colonist from County Leitrim, whose preaching had been greatly owned of God in his native land. The year of his arrival is uncertain ; it can scarcely have been later than 1766. Whether Embury or Strawbridge was the first to open his commission on colonial ground is a disputed question amongst American Methodists ; we shall not venture to pass a judgement upon it. Certain it is that when Wesley's itinerants in 1769 reached Maryland, they found at Sam's Creek, in Frederick County, where Strawbridge lived, in the interior of the colony, a rude log-chapel already built, a Methodist Society of considerable size meeting there, a wide Circuit mapped out, and a religious revival in progress throughout the region. Strawbridge's work extended to the neighbourhood of Baltimore eastwards, and far into the backwoods.

The advance of Methodism from this centre was much more rapid and unimpeded during the first generation than in the northward regions. The earliest detailed returns of American membership (for the year 1785), found in the *Minutes of Conference*, credit the north of Maryland with no less than 3,000 out of a total constituency of 59,000. The War of Independence arrested Methodist work in the north ; but before its outbreak (1774) the new preaching had taken a powerful hold of the population of Maryland and the contiguous regions. Asbury's love of order made it difficult for him to appreciate Strawbridge's position and his services ; but the fatherhood of Methodism in the Middle and Southern States belongs indisputably to this almost forgotten man, and in Maryland, rather than in New York, lay the centre and heart of primitive American Methodism.

Strawbridge became 'virtually an itinerant,' and on his own account ; he 'preached with an ardour and fluency which

drew crowds to his rustic assemblies,' and everywhere revival attended his steps. His conversation is said to have been as attractive as his preaching. He won from his neighbours such hearty respect that they took charge of his farm in his long and frequent absences, and kept his family from want; they built for him the log-chapel at Sam's Creek. He laboured with continued success until his death in 1781. He was a Preacher, and a maker of Preachers; the first itinerants reared on American ground came from Strawbridge's Circuit. A man of robust and independent character, probably of mature age when he emigrated, he pursued his way alone, waiting for no sanction, and seeking no support from England, but raising up helpers around him as he needed them. It is much to be regretted that no continuous account of the work of Robert Strawbridge has been preserved.

The isolation and self-reliance of the Maryland pioneer gave rise to the first ecclesiastical trouble of American Methodism. Large numbers of his converts had no ordained clergy to look to for Christian ordinances. Ordained Ministers, either of the Anglican or Dissenting orders, were wanting on the frontier, and those employed in more settled districts at that time were too often undesirables. Where sacramental communion was accessible, Methodists were frequently repelled, as in English parishes, from the Lord's Table.

Under these conditions Strawbridge took the law into his own hands, baptizing and administering the Lord's Supper at the desire of the people, who looked to him as their father in Christ. He was out of the reach of Wesley's restraining hand, and held his usurpation to be justified by necessity. To multitudes who had received him as a messenger of God he could say, 'The seal of my apostleship are ye in the Lord.' But this irregularity embarrassed and scandalized Wesley's helpers when they came on the scene. They were bound to insist on Methodist rule, which forbade Lay Preachers to handle the Sacraments. Naturally, Strawbridge and his adherents, who formed the larger proportion of American Methodism, were loth to forgo the privileges they had assumed, and a schism was narrowly averted. Matters came to a crisis during the war, when the dissident Southern Preachers were persuaded, with extreme reluctance, to suspend their administration of the ordinances until the country should be at rest,



when a proper settlement might be arrived at. The action of Wesley in 1784 gave American Methodism its liberty, and the contention terminated. Strawbridge's bold initiative had precipitated the solution, which he did not live to see.

But we are anticipating the march of events. In the year 1768, while 'Wesley Chapel' was building in New York, John Wesley received a communication from a certain Thomas Taylor, newly arrived from England, one of the eight joint purchasers of the John Street property. The chief sentences of this striking letter are as follows:

There is another point . . . in which I must importune your assistance, not only in my own name, but also in that of the whole Society. We want an able and experienced Preacher; one who has both gifts and grace necessary for the work. God has not, indeed, despised the day of small things. There is a real work of grace begun in many hearts by the preaching of Mr. Webb and Mr. Embury; but although they were both useful, and their hearts in the work, they want many qualifications for such an undertaking; and the progress of the work here depends much upon the qualifications of Preachers. . . . We must have a man of wisdom, of sound faith, and a good disciplinarian—one whose heart and soul are in the work; and I doubt not but, by the blessing of God, such a flame will soon be kindled as would never stop till it reached the great South Sea. We may make many shifts to evade temporal inconveniences, but we cannot purchase such a Preacher as I have described. Dear sir, I entreat you, for the good of thousands, to send one over. With respect to money for the Preachers' passage [the suppliant now lapses into the plural], if they could not procure it, we could sell our coats and shirts to procure it for them. . . . I most earnestly beg an interest in your prayers, and trust you, and many of our brethren, will not forget the Church in this wilderness.

Captain Webb wrote, urging the same request, and giving it a wider scope in consequence of his labours outside of New York. The plea was supported likewise by Dr. Wrangel, a Swedish Missionary who held a charge in Philadelphia and had become interested in Methodist doings there; he called upon Wesley in London about this time.

The first volunteer for America came forward unsolicited. This was a Local Preacher named Robert Williams, who found a friend to accompany him and to pay the cost of the voyage.<sup>1</sup> Wesley gave him a note of authorization. Arriving in New

<sup>1</sup> Williams' friend was a gentleman of the name of Ashton, who joined the New York Society, to which he was a considerable benefactor. Mr. Ashton removed from New York along with the Emburys. The settlement formed by this party received the name of *Ashgrove* in honour of him.



York early in 1769, Williams was welcomed by the Methodists, and was soon employed in preaching to them. On the coming of Boardman and Pilmoor he joined Robert Strawbridge in the South, and enlarged the field of his labours with conspicuous success; Williams, in fact, has been designated 'the Apostle of Methodism in Virginia and North Carolina.' His name appears in the *Minutes* of the first American Conference (1773), but with a note of censure attaching to it on the ground that he had printed and circulated some of Wesley's sermons without the author's permission—surely, in this new and distant land, a venial, if not a meritorious, offence. Shortly after this time Williams appears to have located. He met with an early death in 1775.

Wesley had reported the case of the American brethren to the Conference of 1768, but action was deferred. At the next Conference, which met in Leeds, the appeal was renewed, and the New York Chapel was now in existence to enforce it. *Question 13* in the *Minutes* of 1769 reads thus:

'We have a pressing call from our brethren in New York (who have built a preaching-house) to come over and help them. Who is willing to go?'

*Answer*: 'Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor.'

*Question 14*: 'What can we further do in token of our brotherly love?'

*Answer*: 'Let us make a collection among ourselves.'

This was immediately done, and out of it £50 was allotted towards the payment of their debt, and about £20 given to our brethren for their passage—a noble contribution from the poor itinerant Preachers of that day. Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor were the two first appointed Methodist Preachers of America, the first Missionaries sent overseas by the Methodist Conference. They were neither of them great men; but they were devoted and competent men, each about thirty years of age, Boardman having 'travelled' six and Pilmoor four years at this date. The former had already been in charge of important Circuits. Boardman is described as 'pious, good-natured, sensible, greatly beloved by all who knew him.' Pilmoor was the abler of the pair—'a man of fine presence, executive skill, easy address, and rare courage.'

As Richard Boardman travelled on horseback through 'the

Peak' of Derbyshire to join his ship at Bristol, he halted for a night in the village of Monyash. There he preached from the touching passage in 1 Chron. iv. 9 and 10, relating to Jabez and his mother. Mary Redfern, the future mother of Jabez Bunting, was a hearer of that sermon, under which she was brought to the saving knowledge of God. In memory of the occasion she called her only son by the name of *Jabez*. In this way the great leader of Methodism in the next century, the founder of the Missionary Society, was linked by a sacred tie to the first missionary act of his Church.

The voyagers landed on October 20, 1769, near Philadelphia. Pilmoor remained in this city, taking charge of the Society and congregation gathered by Thomas Webb, which rapidly multiplied under the new ministry, while Boardman repaired to New York, and was installed in authority there. For some time the two Preachers interchanged between New York and Philadelphia, where the Societies continued to grow in numbers and influence. From Philadelphia excursions were made as far as Baltimore, and Pilmoor came into touch with Strawbridge's work. Captain Webb was about this time placed on the Retired List of the Army. He fixed his home in Long Island, to the north-east of New York, and spread Methodism there, while he took preaching tours extending southwards to Philadelphia and Delaware State.

The Missionaries had not long arrived when the Emburys and Hecks, with some other of their associates, removed to the township of Camden, situated one hundred and fifty miles north of New York, thus introducing Methodism into the interior of New York State. In this neighbourhood Philip Embury continued his labours as Local Preacher until he met his death, through accident, in 1775. After the war the little Palatine company migrated amongst the Loyalists to Canada, where a third time they were the pioneers of their Church.

Two helpers were enlisted on the field by the Missionaries—John King, arriving as an emigrant from England late in 1769, and sent by Pilmoor into Delaware as a licensed exhorter, who grew into a Preacher of signal power and usefulness; and Edward Evans, an old convert of Whitefield's. The latter was the first Local Preacher put on the 'Plan' in Philadelphia, and shares, with Richard Owen of Maryland, the reputation

of being the earliest Methodist Preacher of American birth. But death quickly terminated his labours.

King was an Oxford graduate and a medical licentiate of London, whom his family had cast off for his Methodism. He itinerated in America from 1770 to 1777, in which latter year he located, after his marriage, commencing a medical practice in North Carolina, where he died in 1794. Dr. King remained an active Local Preacher, and was frequently Asbury's host. He did a great work for the Methodism of Virginia and North Carolina in his early years.<sup>1</sup>

The Philadelphia congregation in Pilmoor's first year outgrew the rigging-loft which had been hired for Captain Webb's use; they purchased, with Webb's help and encouragement, a commodious chapel which had been built for the Germans, but was now standing empty, known as St. George's Church. This remains still in occupation—the second Methodist Church opened in America; 'the Old Cathedral,' it is called. In the same year (1770) a Preacher's house was built adjoining Wesley Chapel, and the thoughtful New York Methodists furnished a *library* to feed their Minister's mind!

Boardman and Pilmoor wrote home to Wesley glowing accounts of their success, and of the harvest ready for Methodist reaping in the new country. This news prompted Wesley to invite a second time volunteers for America, at the Bristol Conference of 1771. The record in the *Minutes* stands as follows:

*Question 7:* 'Our brethren in America cry aloud for help. Who are willing to go over and help them?'

*Answer:* 'Five are willing.' (The two appointed were Francis Asbury and Richard Wright.)

The former was an itinerant of five years' standing, the latter but of one. In Francis Asbury, British Methodism gave its supreme gift to America—a man in character, labour, and influence comparable to John Wesley himself. To his work

<sup>1</sup> Wesley did not send John King out as a Preacher, but knew him well and took an interest in him, writing him a remarkable letter on hearing of his preaching in America, in which he gives him the advice: 'Scream no more, at the peril of your soul. . . . Speak with all your heart, but with a moderate voice. Herein be a follower of me, as I am of Christ. . . . Oh, John, pray for an advisable and teachable temper. By nature you are far from it: you are stubborn and headstrong. Your last letter was written in a very wrong spirit.' One suspects that Wesley had declined to employ this vehement young man in England, because of his violent manner and self-assertion. He may have judged him somewhat to blame in the quarrel with his family.



we must devote a separate chapter. His companion, Richard Wright, proved an unfortunate selection. He had showed considerable talent and promise, and was at first greatly admired in the New York pulpit. 'Spoilt by flattery,' as some one says, he proved unstable and unequal in character to the strain of American life. After three years' service in the colonies he returned to England, and shortly afterwards abandoned the ministry.

In the *Minutes* of 1772 only the four Preachers sent from England since 1768 appear as stationed in 'America'; the Church membership is 500—an estimate seemingly not including Strawbridge's Societies, which had not yet come under the purview of the British Conference. John King and Robert Williams had, however, figured on the American Stations for 1770, and served continuously from this time. Their names reappear on the list in 1773, when the American membership has doubled in twelve months, being now 1,000. They were men of extraordinary fire and energy, Williams being a revivalist of the strongest type. Both were drawn to Strawbridge, and carried forward the great work he had begun. King was the first Methodist to preach within Baltimore city.

In 1773 Wesley and the British Conference were induced to send across the Atlantic a third pair of Preachers. Captain Webb had visited England in 1772, and made strong representations on the subject.<sup>1</sup> Methodism had now a secure footing in New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore. Its Circuit system and itinerant method were peculiarly suited to colonial conditions, and the ears of the people were open to its message. Revival movements were frequent, and the Preachers were in request on all sides. At the same time Webb reported serious defects of discipline, and intimated some disagreement existing amongst the Preachers. Boardman and Pilmoor, in Asbury's judgement, did not travel sufficiently, and nursed the city congregations at the expense of the country. Wesley had written in the autumn of 1772, empowering Asbury to act as Superintendent over the heads of his two seniors, who naturally resented this, and replied making complaints against his ruling. The whole staff was too young for the oversight of so wide and difficult a field.

<sup>1</sup> He attempted to enlist Joseph Benson at this time, and John Fletcher, of Madeley, seconded his persuasions. But for his poor health, Fletcher himself would have embarked with Webb.



Wesley's sense of the importance of the juncture was shown by his choice of Thomas Rankin, under the title of 'General Assistant,' for the Superintendency of America—a Preacher of twelve years' service, and amongst the most energetic and trusted of the home staff. The choice was not in all respects a happy one. Rankin had sterling qualities, but showed a certain stiffness and severity which told against him with the Americans. He was a Scotchman of the dour type, strict both with himself and with others, full of courage and high-souled devotion, but something of a martinet—'a kind of iron man' Wakeley calls him.<sup>1</sup> 'He will not be admired as a Preacher,' Asbury writes after hearing him for the first time, 'but as a disciplinarian he will fill his place.' His preaching, however, was at times powerful and moving, and always deeply spiritual. Had he joined the *suaviter in modo* with the *fortiter in re*, his discipline would have been more effective.

Rankin's companion was George Shadford, a choice young Preacher of tender spirit and winning utterance—'one of the most beautiful characters amongst the early itinerants.' He 'had a great harvest of souls in America' during his brief sojourn, and his departure was much lamented. Asbury's soul was knit to Shadford as that of David to Jonathan. Wesley wrote a characteristic letter of farewell to Shadford, with a touch of the sublime :

DEAR GEORGE,—The time is arrived for you to embark for America. You must go down to Bristol, where you will meet with T. Rankin, Captain Webb, and his wife [this couple were now returning to America]. I let you loose, George, on the great continent of America. Publish your message in the open face of the sun, and do all the good you can.

I am, dear George,

Yours affectionately,

JOHN WESLEY.

A volunteer Local Preacher named Joseph Yearbry accompanied Rankin, Shadford, and Webb. Yearbry took his part in the Conference held upon Rankin's arrival, and his name stands on the list of the Preachers stationed by it, though not entered on the Stations of the British Conference. He served in the itinerant ranks for a very brief period.

The hurried gathering above named—the first American

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter XXX in J. B. Wakeley's *Lost Chapters on the History of American Methodism*, a book containing valuable historical material.

Methodist Conference—was provoked by Rankin's alarm at the irregularities of the American Societies. It met at Philadelphia on July 14, 1773. Ten Preachers were assembled (the identical number, it is observed, of John Wesley's first Conference in 1744), including the three last arrived, and Thomas Webb with them—all the ten were Europeans. Stricter order was provided for; regulations were passed intended to bring Strawbridge's Societies into line with the rest.

'Ought not [it was asked] 'the authority of Mr. Wesley and that of (the British) Conference to extend to the Preachers and people in America, as well as in Great Britain and Ireland?' *Answer*: 'Yes.'

The second Question was:

'Ought not the Doctrine and Discipline of the Methodists, as contained in the *Minutes*, to be the sole rule of our conduct, who labour in the connexion with Mr. Wesley in America?' *Answer*: 'Yes.'

A series of rules were then laid down, in good Wesleyan fashion, on the basis of the above understanding. The first two of these show where the pinch of the difficulty lay, and from what quarter trouble was apprehended.

Rule 1. Every Preacher who acts in connexion with Mr. Wesley and the brethren who labour in America is strictly to avoid administering the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Rule 2. All the people among whom we labour to be earnestly exhorted to attend the Church, and to receive the ordinances there; but in a particular manner to press the people of Maryland and Virginia to the observance of this minute.

Alas for the vanity of human legislation! Strawbridge declined submission,<sup>1</sup> and the English Preachers were unable to enforce it. They could not disown him, in view of his character and success; they admitted that his work bore the seal of the Holy Ghost. They waited and worked with patience to bring his people round to the proper Wesleyan order. Strawbridge probably felt that he owed no allegiance to the English Missionaries—his work had begun before their arrival; and the

<sup>1</sup> Asbury, in his journal, states this resolution to have been adopted with the understanding that 'no Preacher in our connexion shall be permitted to administer the ordinances at this time except Mr. Strawbridge, and he under the particular direction of the Assistant' (i.e. Rankin). Strawbridge appears to have paid no attention to this last proviso, nor would he consent to change his Circuit at the order of Asbury or Rankin, while he claimed ministerial powers which they dared not arrogate. This, to be sure, was independency, and not Methodism.

withdrawal of the clergy, who were leaving the country alarmed by the rising of the revolutionary storm, strengthened the case for independent administration of the Sacraments.

Six Circuits are mapped out in the appointments of this Conference—New York, Philadelphia, New Jersey (with two Preachers), Baltimore (with four), Norfolk, and Petersburg—the two last Circuits in Virginia. Amongst the ten Preachers manning these Circuits (including Robert Strawbridge) two names appear that are new to us. There was Abraham Whitworth, an English-born immigrant, called out during the previous year in the New Jersey Circuit and a member of the Philadelphia Conference—a man ‘of powerful eloquence and extraordinary usefulness’ (Stevens), who, after a few years of fruitful evangelism, fell into the snare of intemperance; and William Watters, of Baltimore city, Maryland, ‘the first regular Methodist Preacher of the New World.’ Watters exercised a comparatively long and most arduous ministry, and proved a true Methodist saint and a peacemaker, greatly valued by his brethren. Boardman and Pilmoor received no appointments, they had intimated their intention of returning to England, whither they sailed in January, 1774, after four years’ labour in the country.<sup>1</sup> Their strong Loyalist sentiments rendered the continuance in the American field of Wesley’s first Missionaries almost impossible.

Notwithstanding the tightening of the reins of discipline, the second American Conference found the membership in Society nearly doubled during the ten months’ interval. The sum-total was now 2,073, two-thirds of these belonging to Maryland and Virginia. The previous six Circuits were enlarged to ten, by sub-division and extension; the 10 itinerants had become 17. Improved financial arrangements were effected at this Conference; sixty-four dollars a year, beside travelling expenses, were to be paid as the regular Preacher’s stipend. Stricter regulations were laid down for itinerancy, on the motion

<sup>1</sup> Richard Boardman died in the work nine years later, being struck down suddenly in the midst of his days, and leaving behind him a blessed memory. Joseph Pilmoor, on his return to England, left Wesley’s service for a while, but rejoined the ranks in 1776, when we find him appointed to the London Circuit—a tribute to his superior preaching. In 1785 his name disappears again; he took umbrage at his omission from the list of ‘the Hundred.’ Returning to America, as the war was now over, he took orders in the Protestant Episcopal Church. He held pastorates in New York and Philadelphia, the University of Philadelphia honouring him with a Doctorate of Divinity. He resumed friendly relations with the Methodists, and Asbury was much attached to him. He died, greatly venerated, at a ripe old age.



of Asbury, with whom Rankin was in full agreement upon this point. New York and Philadelphia were to exchange their Ministers every four months, while the country Preachers moved to new Circuits once in six months. The name of Robert Strawbridge drops from the American Stations in 1774, doubtless through disapproval of his recalcitrance in the matter of the Sacraments ; but no formal rupture takes place. Richard Wright had already, early in the year, taken ship for England.

James Dempster and Martin Rodda appear in the *Minutes* of the British Conference for 1774 as Missionaries to America. These were the last appointments made by Wesley for the colonies. Of 'Jemmy Dempster' he held a high opinion. Dempster was a Scotchman, of University training and of ten years' service in the British ministry. On his arrival he was stationed in New York, where he gave promise of special usefulness ; but he retired from the work through failure of health before the year 1775 was out, joining the Presbyterian ministry, in which he laboured acceptably for nearly thirty years after this date. He made the change, however, 'with the distinct avowal of his adherence to the Wesleyan doctrine.' Rodda, who had 'travelled' twelve years in England, was a less satisfactory character. His entanglement in some anti-revolutionary plot greatly aggravated the suspicion and reproach under which the Methodists lay during the early stages of the War of Independence. He was compelled (1777) to flee for his life, taking refuge with the British fleet. Though he was re-employed in the English ministry, his name drops from the *Minutes* in 1781. Dempster and Rodda were accompanied by William Glendenning, another Scotchman and a Local Preacher of some standing, but of somewhat ill-balanced mind ; he served in the American itinerancy till 1784, when he fell into mental disorder. So the last batch of English recruits proved unserviceable ; America must henceforth depend on a home-grown ministry.

Three notable Americans entered the itinerancy at or about this time. Philip Gatch sprung from a good Maryland family—a man of small stature, but of mighty soul and indefatigable spirit ; 'honest, simple Daniel Ruff,' as Asbury describes him, adding, 'Such is the wisdom and power of God that He has wrought marvellously by this plain man, that no flesh may glory in His presence' ; and Benjamin Abbott, the greatest



of all the home-born evangelists of his time in North America, who, though entering the separated ministry a few years later, was a fellow labourer at this period with Daniel Ruff. 'An evangelical Hercules,' writes Stevens. 'It is probable that no Methodist labourer of his day reclaimed more men from abject vice' than did Benjamin Abbott; 'he seldom preached without visible results, and his prayers were overwhelming.' Abbott hailed from New Jersey; the other two, like Watters, were, directly or indirectly, Strawbridge's sons in the Gospel.

Beside those who entered the itinerancy, Strawbridge gathered around him a band of Local Preachers of like spirit and power, amongst whom Richard Owen, Sater Stephenson, Nathan Perigo, Richard Webster, Edward Dromgoole, were the most conspicuous; several of these 'travelled' intermittently. Owen was Strawbridge's intimate companion, and extended his labours. There were two Anglican clergymen, Devereux Jarratt and A. McRoberts, both of Virginia, who deserve mention as showing themselves, in contrast with most of their brethren, hearty friends and encouragers of the Methodist Preachers. These two parish clergymen itinerated in their own Districts, and spread the flame of revival by their preaching; they played somewhat the part of Fletcher and Grimshaw in relation to English Methodism. Jarratt was amongst Asbury's best allies and counsellors. The religious life of Old Virginia owes much to his powerful ministry.<sup>1</sup>

Rankin held his third conference in May, 1775, shortly after the second American Congress, also held in Philadelphia. The war had opened a month earlier with the battles of Lexington and Concord, and the whole country was aflame with rebellion. Philadelphia itself was an armed camp. The situation accentuated the differences between the 'General Assistant' and his able lieutenant. Asbury was no less jealous for discipline than his superior, but he understood the American people and the causes underlying their revolt as Rankin did not, and as Wesley, across the Atlantic, was quite unable to do. Rankin, in displeasure, sent Asbury out of the way to the far South, reporting upon his conduct to such effect that Wesley wrote to recall him to England. By a good providence Wesley's dispatch failed to reach the offender on his remote Circuit, with

<sup>1</sup> The Church of England had been 'established' in Virginia by the Local Legislature, and had divided the colony into ninety-five parishes, fairly covering its whole extent. Most of its clergy, however, disappeared in the Revolution.

which communication was broken by the war ; and, on better information, the order was cancelled. Notwithstanding the loss of Boardman, Pilmoor, and Wright, the Societies continued to grow. At this Conference the Church membership was reported at over 3,000 (an increase of 50 per cent. in the year), with 19 travelling Preachers. But Rankin's position became increasingly difficult ; the Church was politically divided, and its unity strained to the uttermost. Methodists fought upon both sides in the opposing armies. The colonial-born people and Preachers were, to a man, in sympathy with the patriots ; the English-born Preachers naturally leaned to the Loyalists, amongst whom were counted also the leading laymen of the New York Society. Asbury's heart bled for England, but his judgement was with her insurgent sons.

Amid the clash of arms and the severing of kindred and nearest friends by civil strife, the work of God went forward. The clergy, identified in popular resentment with the Tories, with a few exceptions fled the country. The Methodist Preachers, especially in the Middle States, redoubled their labours, and exposed themselves to every hardship and danger, while in the midst of struggle and distress men's hearts were opened to spiritual impressions, and the nation in its agony cast itself on the help of God. Methodism rendered an inestimable service at this crisis, instilling the Gospel of Christ into the spirit of the Republic in its fluid, creative period, when the colonies were being fused in the furnace of war for the making of a mighty State. The Conference of 1776 (the year of the Declaration of Independence) met in Baltimore—a sign that Methodism was gravitating southwards.<sup>1</sup> It recorded a growth in membership from 3,000 to 5,000, in spite of the diminution suffered in the northern Circuits which were disorganized by the war.

The Conference of 1776 enlisted amongst its nine accepted candidates for the ministry two of heroic mould—Freeborn Garrettson, a Marylander, and Francis Poythress, a Virginian ; both were young men of birth and education. The former had

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Abel Stevens remarks on the precedence of the Middle and Southern States in the Methodism of early days : ' Methodism took much of its primitive tone from the characteristic temperament of the colonies of Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia. . . . The subtler intelligence and severer temper of the North were to intervene at the opportune moment, to develop its literary, theological, and educational interests, and to embody it in effective and enduring forms of policy, but it needed yet the animation, the energetic temperament, the social aptitudes, the devotional enthusiasm, of the more Southern communities ' (*History of the M.E. Church*, Vol. I., pp. 422-23).

liberated his slaves on his conversion ; his *Life*, written by Nathan Bangs, is a classic of Methodist biography, rich in spiritual experience and brave adventure. We shall meet him again in Nova Scotia. Poythress, after a reckless youth, was brought to the knowledge of God under Jarratt's ministry. He joined the Methodists on their first appearance in the country, and soon took a commanding place amongst his brethren, possessing all the abilities needed for a first-rate Methodist Preacher. He was the Methodist apostle of the south-west. Asbury designated Poythress for the Episcopate, but disease clouded his brain when he had scarcely passed middle age.

The 1777 Conference, which met at the house of John Watters (father of William) in Harford County, Maryland, was a time of parting. The English Missionaries were specially suspect with the American Government, partly on account of Wesley's known 'Tory' opinions respecting the colonial revolt, which the enemies of Methodism in America imputed to Wesley's followers. Martin Rodda's conduct appeared to justify the worst suspicions, and the Patriots were exasperated by the action of a renegade Local Preacher named Chauncey Clowe, who 'raised a Tory company of 500 men,' and was caught and executed. In many quarters the Methodists were under the reproach of 'treason to the American cause'; Preachers were mobbed and beaten and imprisoned repeatedly, in several instances escaping with their lives almost by miracle. Under these circumstances, as the struggle continued and the war-fever came to its height, the position of Englishmen who professed allegiance to King George became untenable. They were liable to immediate arrest, and their presence was a danger to their brethren ; the wonder was that they remained so long. Asbury announced his resolve to stay at all hazards ; Rankin and Shadford asked permission to withdraw, which was sorrowfully given. Garrettson, speaking of this session many years later, says :

I shall never forget the parting prayer of that blessed servant of God, Mr. Shadford. The place seemed to be shaken with the power of God. We parted bathed in tears, to meet no more in this world. . . . We had Gospel simplicity, and our hearts were united to Jesus and to one another. We were persecuted, and at times buffeted ; but we took our lives in our hands and went to our different appointments, weeping and sowing precious seed, and the Lord owned and blessed His work.



By all accounts this gathering was 'a season of uncommon affection' and abundant spiritual refreshment. Asbury preached a great sermon from the timely text: 'Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.' The Connexional returns showed an increase of 2,000 upon the Church membership of 5,000 reported a year before; there were 38 itinerants engaged in 14 regular Circuits, 2 of these newly marked out. The growth had entirely taken place in the Middle and Southern States.

Fourteen Preachers were received on trial at this Conference. On some of the new names we must linger. Caleb B. Pedicord—one of the choicest spirits of American Methodism and 'one of the saintliest men of his age'—was a fruit of Strawbridge's ministry; 'his aspect was beautiful in its combined expression of intelligence, moral refinement, and pathos. . . . Marvels are told of the quiet, pathetic force of his sermons' (Stevens). He suffered severely from the violence of the times, and ended his devoted course prematurely in 1785. Few of the early itinerants of that period reached old age. John Tunnell and William Gill were bosom friends, the former excelling in simplicity and unction, the latter exhibiting a peculiar blend of intellectual and spiritual power, both famous winners of souls. Gill was esteemed 'the most profound, the most philosophic, mind in the Methodist ministry of his day' (Stevens). The two friends passed away, after exhausting labours, in 1789 and 1790. John Dickens, a Londoner by birth and an Etonian by training, was the scholar of the infant Conference; a mighty Preacher and sagacious counsellor besides. Senior to most of the itinerants, and greatly trusted by them, he did more than any other man to secure the adoption of the Constitution proposed by Dr. Coke in 1784. Appointed to New York in 1783, he re-established the Society there, decimated by the war; he founded the Methodist Book Concern, which has grown to so huge a size, in 1789. Asbury, who leaned greatly on Dickens' judgment, said of him:

For probity, profitable preaching, holy living, Christian education of his children, secret closet prayer, I doubt whether his superior is to be found in England or America.

Rearing such Preachers as these, the Western Conference needed no longer the nursing of the old country. In the years



of her travail-pangs, America was a teeming mother of gifted and brave sons, of men mighty on the battle-field and men strong to wield the sword of the Spirit.

First Rankin, and then Shadford, sailed eastward before the close of 1777. Captain Webb left the colonies earlier; the old soldier of King George was not the man to hide his colours. The story of American Methodism, up to the epoch of its independence, belongs henceforth to the life of Francis Asbury, to whom our next chapter is devoted.

## II

### THE WORK OF FRANCIS ASBURY

The Second Greatest Man in Methodism—Earlier Work of Francis Asbury—Asbury volunteers for America in 1771—Reception in Philadelphia—The Itinerancy—Asbury's Relation to Rankin—Withdrawal of the latter—An *ad interim* Administration—Methodism and the Struggle for Independence—The Conference at Fluvanna—A critical Conference and a happy issue—Rapid Growth of the Church—Ministerial Hardships—A Movement Westwards—John Wesley's Letter: an historical Document—Ordination of Dr. Coke as 'Superintendent of the Methodist Societies in America'—An Episcopal Church—A Book of Discipline—Subsequent Work of Bishop Asbury.

FRANCIS ASBURY holds a place by himself amongst Methodist Missionaries. His genius for spiritual leadership was of the like order with that of John Wesley, and received in the new country where his lot was cast a marvellous development. He witnessed a religious transformation throughout the North American colonies no less signal and even more extensive than that which Wesley achieved in eighteenth-century England. The Episcopalian Methodism of the United States, which in its present magnitude and resources exceeds all the other branches of the common stock put together, owns Francis Asbury for its father under God. Justly has he been designated 'the second greatest man in Methodism.'

The national position of that powerful Communion, and some of its most commanding features, may be traced to the character and labours of this devoted man. In virtue of his spiritual pre-eminence and the influence he wielded at the formative epoch of his adoptive country, Asbury holds a place amongst its historic heroes. Americans cannot forget that this plain Methodist Preacher, an Englishman by birth and home-attachment, nevertheless threw in his lot with the colonists, refusing to leave the souls which God had given him in the land of his sojourning; that he recognized the justice of the insurgent cause, and saw in the despised 'rebels' the

making of a noble nation ; that he rendered in their time of destitution a priceless ministry, while he raised up amongst them a band of helpers charged with his own spirit, whom he shaped into one of the most effective preaching orders the Church of Christ has ever known. The name of Bishop Asbury deserves to stand amongst those most honoured in the traditions of English-speaking Christendom.

Francis Asbury was born on August 20, 1745, at Hamstead Bridge, in South Staffordshire, which is situated near to the present Handsworth College, about five miles north of Birmingham. Joseph and Elizabeth Asbury, his parents, lived on a small farm in circumstances of moderate comfort. They brought up their only son with tender care and in the fear of the Lord, and placed him at the best school the neighbourhood supplied. From this, however, he was removed before the age of fourteen, to be apprenticed to business. His brief schooling proved sufficient to ground him well in his mother tongue ; he acquired studious habits and a serious way of thinking, which enabled him to pursue his education with little help from others, and gave him a modest self-reliance and force of judgement which soon became noticeable. Imbued at home with Christian convictions, young Asbury's heart responded to the preaching of the evangelical clergymen who were accustomed to visit the Bromwich Church, where he worshipped. Under the impressions thus made on his mind, which were fostered by his mother's counsel and prayers, he attended the Methodist meetings then beginning to be held in private houses in the neighbouring district. Amid the hearty fellowship to which he was thus introduced, he speedily found the treasure of the love of Christ on which his heart was set, and was able to testify that ' he was free from guilt and fear, and had power over sin, with the possession of great peace and joy.' This Divine experience the eager youth longed to impart to others. Of his own accord he began to address meetings, first in the homes of friends, then at his father's house, to which the neighbours flocked, amazed at the ardour and eloquence of the boy evangelist. By the age of seventeen he had become a recognized Local Preacher ; his preaching expeditions covered a wide area in the Midland counties, where much fruit attended his ministrations, and he cheerfully underwent toil and persecution. He sought mental improvement more

diligently than ever, and his early preaching evinced intelligence joined with fervour.

John Wesley's eyes were soon upon this consecrated and adventurous young man, who was indeed after his own heart ; he called him to the itinerant work at twenty-one years of age. For five years Asbury followed this vocation in England with conspicuous success, earning the affection of the people and the high esteem of his brethren. His was a nature formed without early twist or warp ; his heart had opened to the Saviour's coming at the first appeal. Grave, thoughtful, sympathetic, gentle, and modest, with an unstudied refinement of manners that was always winning, he was at the same time most exact in matters of duty, a man of deep reverence and prayerfulness who fulfilled with an undivided heart the law of Christ, and shrunk from no demand upon his courage and self-denial. He became well versed in the Methodist discipline, and thoroughly attached to John Wesley's aims and principles as well as to his person.

Francis Asbury's attention was roused by the appeals made to English Methodism on behalf of America in 1768 and 1769, and by the dispatch of Boardman and Pilmoor at the Conference of the latter year. The impression grew upon his mind that the Lord had need of him in this new field. He went up to the Bristol Conference of 1771 revolving this idea. Hence, when an appeal was made by Wesley to this assembly for the American service, Asbury volunteered without hesitation and was promptly accepted. Though his parents were approaching old age and had no other son, they would not oppose the designation, believing it to be of the Lord. He sailed from Bristol with Richard Wright for his companion ; the two landed at Philadelphia after a voyage of eight weeks. In this city, through the preaching of Captain Thomas Webb and Joseph Pilmoor, Methodism was now well established. 'The people,' writes Asbury, 'looked on us with pleasure, hardly knowing how to show their love sufficiently, bidding us welcome with fervent affection and receiving us as the angels of God.'

We have described in the previous chapter the state of infant Methodism and of the American colonies, at the period of Asbury's arrival. The quarrel commenced by George Grenville's ill-omened Stamp Act of 1765 had reached an



acute stage ; resentment against the British Government was rising to fever-heat, and revolt was openly contemplated ; the leading Patriots of the scattered and widely different settlements were drawing together, and entertained the most daring counsels. Asbury felt the electric condition of the atmosphere. With his candour and keen discernment, he appreciated the colonial point of view as his English colleagues failed to do, and bore himself, in true Wesleyan fashion, as ' the friend of all, the enemy of none.' From the outset he gave evidence of the tact and power of adaptation so often wanting to Britishers amongst strangers, which were prime requisites for success amongst the Americans, particularly at such a time as this.

Staying ten days in Philadelphia, Asbury travelled to New York to make acquaintance with Richard Boardman and the older Methodist Society there. Here he received a second hearty welcome, and describes the people as ' loving and serious '—with the added merit, great in his eyes, that ' there appeared also among them a spirit of discipline.'<sup>1</sup> He declined, however, to remain by the side of Boardman in the city ; in a few months he formed a ' Circuit,' with a round of preaching-places, in the district lying about New York. His predecessors, finding the important congregations gathered in New York and Philadelphia a sufficient care, had hitherto limited their ' travelling ' for the most part to an exchange between these two capitals. Asbury set his face against the tendency to form a settled local pastorate, the establishment of which would have destroyed the essential features of Methodism and disabled it for its work on the new continent. He writes in his journal, during the early weeks of his experience in America :

I have not yet the thing which I seek—a circulation of the Preachers to avoid partiality and popularity. However, I am fixed to the Methodist plan, and do what I do faithfully, as unto God. I expect trouble is at hand. . . . I am willing to suffer, yea, to die, rather than betray so good a cause by any means. My brethren seem unwilling to leave the cities, but I will show them the way. . . . I have come to this country with an upright intention, and through the grace of God I will make it appear. . . . No man shall bias me with soft words and fair speeches . . . but whomsoever I please or displease, I will be faithful to God, to the people, and to my own soul.

<sup>1</sup> The point of discipline which, as appears from his journal, Asbury had great difficulty in establishing was the exclusion of non-members from the Society meetings. These he was at pains to hold frequently.

Brave words, and amply redeemed by the writer. The record indicates a friendly struggle brought about by Asbury's coming, in which he combated the attempt made by the Societies established in the two cities first occupied, to secure the continuous services of the Preachers sent from England, and thus, in effect, to nullify 'the Methodist plan' *ab initio*. Pilmoor's popularity in Philadelphia had become a snare to him in his direction. Referring to Asbury's views on the itinerancy, Dr. Stevens writes that this institution served not only to

afford a variety of ministerial gifts to the Societies, but as a sort of military drill to the Preachers. It kept them energetic by keeping them in motion. . . . They were an evangelical cavalry, always in the saddle . . . a mode of life which conduced to that chivalric spirit and heroic character which distinguished them as a class. The system speedily killed off such as were weak in body, and drove off such as were feeble in character ; the remnant were the giants of those days.

At the meeting of the four Preachers held in 1772 Asbury carried his point. Boardman removed north to start a new Circuit around Boston ; Pilmoor south to Virginia, into which province Strawbridge and his Preachers had by this time pushed their operations ; the two latest comers were posted at Philadelphia and New York respectively. Round Philadelphia Asbury soon created a wide Circuit, as he had previously done in working from the other centre. The breakdown of Wright compelled him, in the autumn of the same year, to take charge of the work at New York, where he found the Society thrown into confusion, and had much trouble in restoring order. Judging by report that Asbury was the most competent of his Preachers on the ground, Wesley wrote about this time to commission him as ' Superintendent ' of the American Societies. This appointment was naturally felt to be a slight by Boardman and Pilmoor, who were the older men, and embarrassed Asbury's relations to them.

After settling affairs in New York and providing for the John Street pulpit there, Asbury, who was anxious to unify while he extended Methodist operations in the colonies, returned southwards to Philadelphia, and made his way thence to Maryland, putting himself into communication with Strawbridge and his circle of Societies, with which the Englishman Williams, though not yet a regular itinerant, supplied a link

for Wesley's Missionaries. John King had, moreover, by this time opened the way to Baltimore. Asbury's diplomacy and fine temper now stood him in good stead ; he set matters on a new and better footing in this quarter also, and closed up the gap which had existed between the Methodism of Maryland and that of New York and Philadelphia.

Meanwhile, the letters of the aggrieved missionaries and their friends, and the representations of Thomas Webb, who was at this time in England, convinced Wesley that he must send some Preacher of senior standing and unquestionable authority to take the direction of the work in America. Asbury's fault was his youth, which time was bound to cure, but it was a fault under the circumstances not to be overlooked. A Superintendent of mature age as well as disciplinary power was required, and one thoroughly in Wesley's confidence. Such a man was found in Thomas Rankin, and Wesley designated him ' General Superintendent of the Societies in America.' He sent along with Rankin to the colonial field a couple of young Preachers, George Shadford and Joseph Yearbry, to reinforce the scanty staff. The three sailed in company with Captain Webb, and landed at Philadelphia in June, 1773.

Asbury welcomed Rankin's coming, and built much upon it. In Shadford he found a bosom friend. He was one with the new chief in his zeal for discipline, especially as regarded the maintenance of a strict itinerancy and of a proper class-meeting Church membership ; but differences between the two men after a while betrayed themselves on another side. Rankin's firmness was associated with a stiffness and conventionality, and a dislike for colonial manners, which Asbury could not but deprecate. The Scottish proprieties of the new Superintendent were scandalized by the emotionalism of American revivals. He came to the country expecting to find licence and disorder, and resolved to carry out his ' English ideas of government. He sought to enforce by authority what Asbury so happily secured by conciliation and moral suasion.' In addition to this, Rankin was prepossessed by Wesley's opinions upon colonial politics, preconceptions which a nearer view of the circumstances failed to modify. Though he refrained from meddling with the secular conflict which was near its crisis when he arrived, his sentiments were sufficiently



obvious, and were distasteful to colonial Methodists. The influence of Methodism, as represented by its official head, was counted in the balance against 'the Patriots.' On the other hand, while Asbury was prudently reserved, those who knew him were aware that he saw matters in a different light from his English colleague. The divergence of sympathy caused an almost inevitable coolness between the two leaders; but they were men too good and too devoted to their Church to quarrel; and Asbury, though sometimes remonstrating against Rankin's measures, steadfastly upheld his authority.

At the Conference of 1775, which immediately followed the outbreak of the war, in some displeasure against Asbury the Superintendent stationed him in the far south-west, remote from the centre of affairs. At the same time he appears, in writing to England, to have represented his coadjutor so unfavourably that Wesley sent an order to recall the latter. Most fortunately, Asbury was beyond reach when this communication arrived, for he would certainly have obeyed, and the Church would have lost its pilot at the height of the storm. Realizing his mistake, Wesley wrote again in a few months to cancel the summons. (Rankin held his ground bravely under increasing odium, until he was convinced that his usefulness in America was at an end, his freedom, if not his life, being in danger.) At the Conference of 1777 he and Shadford announced their intention to withdraw. He had written earlier to Asbury to this effect, and received the following reply:

I can by no means leave such a field for gathering souls to Christ as we have in America. It would be an everlasting dishonour to the Methodists that we should leave 3,000 souls who desire to commit themselves to our care; neither is it the part of a good shepherd to leave his flock in time of danger. Therefore I am determined, by the grace of God, not to leave them, let the consequence be what it may.

This was a noble decision, and momentous for the future. It was only possible through the union of heart which had taken place between shepherd and flock, in virtue of the fact that Asbury had learnt to regard the colonists as other than 'rebels' against the authority of the British Crown.

Since Rankin had given notice of departure, while no direction for meeting this emergency had been received from Mr.



Wesley, and it was possible that all the European Missionaries might be driven from the country, the American Conference of 1777 found it necessary to provide an *ad interim* administration. Five American brethren were accordingly chosen to discharge the duties of 'General Superintendent' while the office remained vacant. The men so appointed were Dromgoole, Gatch, Glendenning, Ruff, and William Watters. The first and third-named were immigrants; it may be presumed that they had become American citizens. In point of fact, the Committee of five never came into power. Asbury remaining on the field, the direction of the Mission reverted to him, although years elapsed before his commission was formally renewed by Wesley; the American Preachers and people spontaneously regarded him as their chief, and submitted to his advice. The condition of the country, and his own solitude and uncertain future, deeply affected Asbury's mind; he writes in his journal about this date:

I know that the Lord governeth the world, therefore these things shall not trouble me. I will endeavour to be ready for life or death; so that if death should come, my soul may joyfully quit the land of sorrow. . . . Oh, delightful felicity! There is no din of war; no unfriendly persecutors of piety; no enchanting world, with concealed destruction; no malevolent spirit to disturb our peace; but all is purity, peace, and joy. Adapting my discourse to the occasion, I preached this morning from Isa. i. 19, 20: 'If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be slain with the sword; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.'

The risks for the Englishman remaining amongst the insurgents were far from imaginary. Though Asbury escaped the personal outrage inflicted on Garrettson and others of his fellow labourers, he soon found his liberty curtailed. While going his rounds on the Baltimore Circuit during the year 1777, he was challenged to swear allegiance to the newly formed State of Maryland. The required declaration contained terms objectionable to his conscience, and he declined subscription, though promising obedience in all civil matters. Expelled from Maryland in consequence of his refusal, he crossed the border into Delaware, where Ministers of religion were excused the oath of allegiance. But the suspicion against him as an Englishman and a recusant became so threatening that he could no longer travel, and found an asylum for two years at

the house of Judge White, a leading magistrate of Delaware, whose friendship he had formed.<sup>1</sup> Even here he was not safe ; for two months he lay concealed during the daytime in the recesses of a dreary swamp ; his host was imprisoned on the sole charge of being a Methodist ! Asbury had, however, friends amongst the Patriots, who strove to disarm the obstinate prejudice against him and his co-religionists. At length he was able to become a citizen of Delaware without the offensive oath, and resumed his liberty, making the Delaware State his Circuit in the first instance. By letter and messenger he had directed the Mission from his retreat, and was visited by many of the Preachers. But his friend's hospitable mansion was a cage to the eager itinerant. In the course of the year 1779 a letter written to Rankin was intercepted by American officers, which disclosed Asbury's real mind on the duty of Methodists towards the Republic ; the Government was satisfied at last that it had in the man so much mistrusted a friend and not a secret enemy. From this time to the end of the war official hindrances ceased and persecution died away.

A scene described by Dr. Abel Stevens,<sup>2</sup> occurring at this anxious juncture, illustrates the ability and address which characterized the American Preachers and their general attitude. Richard Ivey, who 'travelled' from 1778-94, was 'a preacher of quick and solid parts, known from New Jersey to Georgia.' When labouring in the former State, as a friend relates :

A company of soldiers quartered near one of his appointments had resolved to arrest the first Preacher who should come there, and carry him to head quarters. . . . Soon after the congregation had convened, a file of soldiers were marched into the yard and halted near the door ; and two officers came in, drew their swords, crossed them on the table, and seated themselves one on each side of it, but so as to look the Preacher full in the face. I soon saw that he was not influenced by fear. His text was, 'Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.' When he came to enforce the exhortation, 'Fear not,' he paused and said : 'Christians sometimes fear when there is no cause for fear' ; and so, he added, he presumed it was with some then present. 'Those men, engaged in defence of their country's right, meant them no harm.' He spoke fluently and forcibly in commendation

<sup>1</sup> Asbury was singularly happy in the attachments he formed, as the personal influence he gained amongst men of breeding and distinction as well as with the humbler classes of American Society. His bearing, manners, and conversation made him an honoured guest in the highest company, though he never affected such.

<sup>2</sup> *History of the M.E. Church*, Vol. II., pp. 47, 48.

of freedom from foreign and domestic tyranny, looking at the same time first on the swords, and then in the faces of the officers, as if to say, 'This looks a little too much like domestic oppression'; and in conclusion, bowing to each of the officers, and opening his bosom, he said: 'Sirs, I would fain show you my heart; if it beats not high for the legitimate liberty let it for ever cease to beat!' This he said with such a tone of voice and such a look as thrilled the whole audience, and gave him the command of their feelings. The countenances of the officers at first wore a contemptuous frown, then a significant smile, and then they were completely unarmed. They hung down their heads, and before the conclusion of this masterly address shook like the leaves of an aspen. Many of the people sobbed aloud, and others cried out 'Amen!' while the soldiers without (doors and windows being open) swung their hats and shouted 'Huzza for the Methodist parson!' On leaving, the officers shook hands with the Preacher and wished him well; and afterwards said they would share their last shilling with him!

The incident shows, better than many pages of explanation, how Methodism captured the heart of the young nation and became in very deed American to the Americans. Asbury's policy was winning the day.

Beside the loyalty of the English Preachers to King George, to which the action of Martin Rodda had given culpable expression, and the express condemnation which Wesley had passed on the colonial rebellion,<sup>1</sup> other causes concurred to provoke popular animosity toward Methodism. Leading laymen in New York and the North identified themselves with the Loyalist party. Throughout the occupation of that city by the British troops the Methodists were conspicuously in favour—a friendship naturally resented in the opposite camp. In many quarters, however, political suspicion supplied the ostensible rather than the real motive for persecution. The Methodist Preachers 'called sinners to repentance' in no qualified or

<sup>1</sup> See his *Calm Address to the American Colonies*, pp. 76–88 (Vol. XI of the fourth edition of Wesley's *Works*, 1841). Of this appeal, printed in 1775, only a few copies reached America, in consequence of the outbreak of the war—fortunately so for the Methodists, as Asbury judged. Wesley's *Calm Address* was a popular reproduction of Dr. Samuel Johnson's pamphlet entitled *Taxation no Tyranny*. 'It was,' says Stevens, 'Johnson's influence that led him into error of this publication, for he had previously entertained a different view of the question.' In Smith's *History of Wesleyan Methodism*, Vol. I., p. 726, a letter appears addressed to Lord North and the Earl of Dartmouth as members of the Government, on the news arriving of the battles of Concord and Lexington, which is of a very different tenor. 'In spite of all my long rooted prejudices,' Wesley writes, 'I cannot avoid thinking these an oppressed people, asking for nothing more than their legal rights. . . . Waiving this,' he continues, 'is it common sense to use force to the Americans? They are strong; they are valiant; they are one and all enthusiasts, enthusiasts for liberty—calm, deliberate enthusiasts.' Wesley soon foresaw the victory of the American cause and rectified his opinion as to its justice.

timid language ; their denunciations of sin were unsparing and sometimes terrific, and made enemies for them amongst those of the baser sort in all ranks of society. The cry of ' Toryism ' and of ' treason ' furnished to men who hated reproof a welcome pretext for mobbing the obnoxious Preacher, or haling him before magistrates, who had ready ears for charges levelled at denouncers of fashionable sins. The infant Church bore this trial without flinching ; before the struggle ended, it had completely lived down all slander. Strange visitations fell on the ring-leaders in the campaign of violence. Asbury, who was a cool observer, records with reference to the attacks made upon himself and his brethren, ' I do not recollect one Preacher who has been thus treated that something distressing has not followed his persecutors.' Asbury's patience and fairmindedness, and his unfeigned devotion to the good of those who despitefully used him, were not lost upon the conscience of the country.

The Conference of May, 1778, held after Rankin had departed and while Asbury was in confinement, voted into the chair William Watters, the senior native itinerant, though short of twenty-seven years. This was the first session held in Virginia, which had now ' become the chief field of Methodism, comprising nearly two-thirds of its members.' The outlook was dark indeed ; the membership of the Societies had shrunk during the year by more than a seventh ; New York, Philadelphia, and Norfolk (Virginia) were cut off by British occupation from the rest of the Connexion ; the number of itinerants had declined from 38 to 30. Of these 30, 9 were newcomers, so that nearly half the travelling Preachers enumerated in 1777 (including the retired Englishmen) had through the year's casualties been driven from the field.

Having no old Preachers with us [Watters reports] we were as orphans bereft of our spiritual parents ; but though young and inexperienced in business, the Lord looked graciously upon us, and had the uppermost seat in all our hearts.

A note significant for the future follows :

As the administration of the ordinances was laid over the last Conference till this, it of course came up, and found many advocates. With considerable difficulty a large majority was persuaded to lay it over again till the next Conference, hoping that we should by that time be able to see our way more clear in so important a change.



Beside Richard Ivey, other men of high mark were found amongst the nine recruits who joined the itinerancy at this Conference. There was John Major, known as 'the weeping prophet,' whose pathos was irresistible; Henry Willis, the first American ordained at the Christmas Conference of 1784, in whom 'system, spirit, and practice were all united'; and James O'Kelly, 'a warm, zealous Preacher, who acquired great influence,' but who later headed the secession that took place on the establishment of Episcopacy.

The Conference of 1779 was appointed to be held at Fluvanna, in the interior of Virginia. Asbury remained a prisoner in Delaware; in anticipation, therefore, of the regular May session, the Preachers east of the Potomac three weeks earlier assembled (to the number of fifteen) at Judge White's house in order to meet him. Aware of the growing demand for Sacramental administration in the South, and apprehensive that steps would be taken in this direction at Fluvanna, Asbury's little Conference raised the question, 'Shall we guard against a separation from the Church, direct or indirect?' answering it in the words, 'By all means.' At the same time Asbury was declared (in Wesleyan terms) to be the 'General Assistant in America,' for the reasons of his 'age,' his former service in that capacity, and his 'being joined with Messrs. Rankin and Shadforth by express order from Mr. Wesley.' Asbury's record on the occasion is:

We had much prayer, love, and harmony, and all agreed to walk by the same rule and to mind the same thing. As we had great reason to fear that our brethren to the southward might separate from us, we wrote them a soft healing epistle!

Notwithstanding this honeyed letter, and the entreaties of Watters—the only Preacher able to attend both sessions—the men of the South persisted in their determination to give the people the Sacraments. The controversy had lasted for six years; no valid reasons had been advanced against administration, while the claimants, to a large and growing majority of the Church, had been put off, to weariness, in hope of a more convenient season.

The Episcopalian establishment [as they pleaded] is now dissolved in this country; and, therefore, in almost all out Circuits the members are without the ordinances.

The Fluvanna Conference resolved to break off procrastination. A Committee of four was appointed, headed by Gatch, and was constituted by vote 'a Presbytery' with power,

first, to administer the ordinances themselves; the second, to authorize any other Preacher, or Preachers, approved by them, to do the same, ordaining them 'by the form of laying on of hands.'

The above proceedings do not appear in the scanty official *Minutes* of the first Fluvanna Conference; that they took place we know from Philip Gatch's *Life*, and from the subsequent course of affairs. The action taken was highly irregular, and shocking to the ecclesiastical mind; but it must be remembered that the actors were young men, placed in an unprecedented situation—as if castaways on a desert island, and compelled to set up Christian institutions for themselves. Necessity was their strong defence. The American Preachers were acquainted with the resolution which stands in the British *Minutes of Conference* for the year 1755, when the same question had been in debate at home: 'whether separation' from the English Church, it was concluded, be 'lawful or not, it was in no wise expedient.' Had not Wesley himself pronounced 'the Apostolic succession'—the basis of the whole argument for the necessity of Episcopal ordination—to be 'a fable?' Surely in the case of the American Methodists, for most of whom the Church of England had no existence, expediency and lawfulness were both on the side of liberty of administration.

The Preachers meeting at Fluvanna were encouraged to the course they took by the manifest blessing that rested upon their labours. The adverse tide of the preceding year had been completely turned. The Church membership had increased by more than a third, being now returned at the figure of 8,577; the 30 itinerants had become 44,<sup>1</sup> and five were added to the previously existing Circuits. This success, achieved notwithstanding the losses and dislocations occasioned by the war, had been reaped altogether west and south by the Potomac, where the people were hungering for the Sacraments, and where

<sup>1</sup> John Haggerty, Nelson Reed, and Philip Cox, received by the Conference of 1779, were amongst the heroes of the itinerancy. Reed had a long and memorable course—'a man of transparent purity, solid talents, unswerving firmness, and rare symmetry of both moral and mental character'; his commanding appearance matched his force of mind. Cox was English born, diminutive in person, but gifted with prodigious energy, and one of the most powerful evangelists of that or of any age.

Strawbridge's practice had led many to expect Christ's ordinances from their Ministers.

Asbury's fixed fidelity to Wesley and the Church of his youth presented an invincible obstacle to ecclesiastical secession. Nothing exhibits more signally the strength of his influence and his inflexible purpose and patient tact than his success in reversing the Conference decision we have related, and in postponing for still another five years, until proper authorization was secured, the constitution of separate American Methodism.

It was impossible for Asbury to accept the resolutions of Fluvanna ; and as the northern Preachers stood by him, and condemned the action of their brethren as precipitate and arbitrary, a rupture appeared inevitable. 'Both parties trembled for the ark of God, and shuddered at the thought of dividing the Church. There was no bitterness in the contention, the kindest personal relations continued between Asbury and the dissenting Southerners, many of whom were his sons in the Gospel. He could not use the high hand in dealing with them ; had he been inclined to this, his authority was insufficient. His old commission from Wesley had been cancelled by Rankin's appointment ; he had been declared 'General Assistant' only by the vote of the informal Delaware Conference, which included but a fraction of the Preachers. It was known that Wesley had once recalled him, and the footing on which he stood with his chief was doubtful. In every way his position was delicate and precarious. He felt the urgency, and the rightfulness on general grounds, of the American claim to the Sacraments ; but he could not consent to that right being seized ; if unity and order were to be maintained, and a solid foundation laid for the Methodism of America, the rights in question must be acknowledged and freely granted by the parent Church ; the daughter must set up house under her mother's blessing. It was in the highest sense inexpedient, supposing it to be lawful for the American Preachers to constitute themselves an ordaining body. A weaker man than Asbury would have put himself at the head of the radical party, whose convictions indeed he largely shared, under the plea that his hand was forced, and that only by this means could disruption be averted. But he did not waver for an instant, although the men he most valued amongst the American Preachers were against him. They opposed him for his

subservience to Wesley, while Wesley mistrusted him for his compliance with the Americans !

The year 1779-80, a time of great hardship and disadvantage for the work of Methodism, closed with a decrease of 73 in Church membership and of one in the number of Travelling Preachers.<sup>1</sup> The regular Conference (of Fluvanna) of 1779 had designated Manakintown (Virginia) for the next place of meeting ; May 9 was the appointed date. Though Asbury was now free, he thought it advisable to anticipate the ordinary Conference by conclave of the northern Preachers, who were summoned to Baltimore. The *Minutes* of this meeting are in evidence, while the official record of the Manakintown Conference, which had every claim to be considered the regular assembly, is confined to the list of stations ; what further transpired is only known from private memoranda. Of the Preachers who had been parties to the action taken at Fluvanna, only Gatch and Ellis were present in Baltimore. William Watters, who had visited the Fluvanna meeting as a representative from the North, took part in both the Conferences of 1780. He was a persistent mediator throughout the conflict. The Baltimore Conference proceeded on the old lines, 'determining to continue in close connexion with the Church, and to press the people to closer communion with her.' John Wesley might have dictated this resolution ! As to the Fluvanna legislation, it declared : 'This whole Conference disapproves the step taken by the brethren in Virginia.' And again : 'We look upon them no longer as Methodists, in connexion with Mr. Wesley and us, till they come back.' Asbury, Watters, and Garrettson were instructed 'to visit the Virginian brethren, to inform them of our proceedings, and receive their answer.' The conditions of union were 'that the latter should suspend all their administrations, and all meet together in Baltimore the next year.'

So the battle was set in array. The southern Preachers preponderated in number ; they were able and high-spirited men, supported by the bulk of their laity, and they believed

<sup>1</sup> Three men of mark entered the American ministry in 1780—George Mair, whose brief career was that of a burning and shining light ; powerful in the pulpit, he was pre-eminent in 'doorway evangelism,' and had the happiest colloquial tact, thus reaching many of 'the hardest characters and lowest classes otherwise inaccessible to the Gospel ; Caleb Boyer and Ignatius Pigman were spoken of as 'the Paul and Apollos of the Methodist Connexion at that time. When Whatcoat and Vasey heard them at the Christmas Conference (1784) they said they had not heard their equals in the British Connexion except Wesley and Fletcher.'



their measures to be sealed with the Divine favour. Their submission was little to be expected; devoted men sent to secure it set out with heavy hearts.

All three of them have left accounts of the meeting at Manakintown, Watters' story being the most detailed. He writes :

I awfully feared that our visit would be of little consequence, yet I willingly went down in the name of God, hoping against hope. . . . We had a great deal of loving conversation, with many tears; but I saw no bitterness, no shyness, no judging each other. We wept, and prayed, and sobbed; but neither (party) would agree to the other's terms. . . . After waiting two days [he continues], and all hopes of an accommodation failing, we had fixed on starting back early in the morning; but late in the evening it was proposed by one of their own party in Conference (none of the other side being present) that there should be a suspension of ordinances for the present year, and that our circumstances should be laid before Mr. Wesley, and his advice solicited; also that Mr. Asbury should be requested to ride through the different Circuits, and superintend the work at large. The proposal in a few minutes took with all but a few. In the morning, instead of coming off in despair, we were invited to take our seats again in the Conference, where, with great rejoicings and praises to God, we on both sides heartily agreed to the accommodation. I could not but say, 'It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes!' I had by several leading characters on both sides been suspected of leaning to the opposite; could all have agreed to the administration of the ordinances, I should have had no objection; but until that was the case, I could not think ourselves ripe for so great a change.

Asbury, in travelling to the Virginia Conference, found the people 'full of ordinances'; there could be no doubt which way the popular wind was blowing. He was saddened on arrival to perceive the 'inflexible' spirit of the Preachers, amongst whom Gatch, Dickens, and O'Kelly took the lead. Dromgoole alone of the Southerners ranged himself with the northern deputation. 'They wept like children,' Asbury says of his opponents, 'but kept their opinions.' Next morning, when he went to take his leave of the Conference, to his joyful surprise he

found that they had been brought to an agreement, while I was praying as with a broken heart in the house we went to lodge at. . . . There might have been twenty promising Preachers and 3,000 people seriously affected by this separation; but the Lord would not suffer this. . . . Afterward we had a love-feast.

‘We set our faces toward the North,’ writes Garrettson, ‘with gladness of heart, praising the Lord for His great goodness.’

We have enlarged upon this crisis, for it throws into strong relief the character and principles of Asbury, and reveals the quality of the band of men raised up under his leadership amid the fever of the War of Independence. The dispute was, moreover, a rehearsal of the Sacramentarian controversy awaiting British Methodism after Wesley’s death. Even in America, at the height of the political struggle in which his name had been so unfortunately involved, John Wesley’s authority still proved the controlling factor; the settlement effected a few years later proceeded from his hand.

The conflict was ended; Asbury’s patient firmness, seconded by the efforts of the peace-loving Watters, had won the day. The headstrong young Preachers, in the last extremity, could not face the prospect of breaking from John Wesley, and bidding a final good-bye to Francis Asbury. No rankling memory was left behind. Weary of his long confinement, Asbury travelled during the following year from South to North, and far into the wilderness, comforting the people under the miseries of the war, and knitting their hearts together. ‘Always upon the wing,’ he says, ‘I had only time to pray and write my journal.’ The Baltimore Conference of 1780 legislated on social questions; it determined ‘to disapprove the practice of distilling grain into liquor, and disown all who would not renounce it.’ ‘Preachers owning slaves were required to give promises to set them free’; it was further declared that ‘slavery is contrary to the laws of God, man, and nature, and hurtful to society; contrary to the dictates of conscience and pure religion, and doing that which we would not that others should do to us or ours.’ ‘We do pass our disapprobation on all our friends who keep slaves, and advise their freedom.’ This protest anticipated the earliest State legislation against American slavery! Clarkson’s famous University thesis was delivered at Cambridge five years later (Stevens).

A double Conference was again held in April and May, 1781—the smaller, preliminary meeting being convened at Judge White’s house in Delaware, the full Conference at Baltimore, now the leading Methodist city. Restored harmony had been attended with spiritual blessing throughout the Circuits. The

membership of the Societies had reached 10,539 (nine-tenths of these living south of Pennsylvania) an increase of more than one-fourth. The 20 Circuits of a year ago had become 25; the 43 travelling Preachers 55. 'All but one,' Asbury writes of those present, 'agreed to return to the old plan and give up the administration of the ordinances. Our troubles now seem over from that quarter, and there appears to be a considerable change in the Preachers from North to South. All was conducted in peace and love.' Much was done at this Conference to regularize administration and to make discipline more uniform.

Two recruits joined the itinerants in 1781 who filled a large place in early American Methodism—both of them ex-soldiers of the Revolution. These were Philip Bruce, 'a man of high and firm character and intellect,' and 'one of the most laborious founders of the Church in the South,' 'well fitted to be at the helm in times of darkness and difficulty'; and Joseph Everett, who is described as 'the roughest-spoken preacher that ever stood in the itinerant ranks.' Everett had been, he confesses, 'one of Bunyan's biggest Jerusalem sinners,' and sin found in him a relentless and fearless enemy. He plied the word of God as a flail beating on the threshing-floor; yet 'the promises of the Gospel to penitent sinners dropped from his lips like honey from the honeycomb.' Under the preaching of such men as Cox and Everett, Abbott and Easter, the course of Methodism in North America for the first generation was that of a continuous revival.

Asbury carried on his superintendence of the American work, traversing the entire area of the Connexion, with no other warrant than the invitation of Preachers and people. The Conference of 1782—which met in two sessions, first in Virginia, then at Baltimore—unanimously declared him 'General Assistant according to Mr. Wesley's original appointment.' But Asbury would not assert the commission received from Wesley ten years before and subsequently cancelled; he refused to govern the Preachers in any other capacity than as their elected chief. Mr. Wesley held aloof during the war, taking no authoritative measures. Jarratt the clergyman at this Conference was thanked for his 'kind and friendly services' rendered 'from our first entrance into Virginia' by a formal resolution, to which was appended a direction to 'the preachers



in the South to consult him and take his advice, in the absence of brother Asbury.' Jarratt preached every day of the Virginia session, and administered the Sacrament to Preachers and people; there was no wilful breach with the Church of England. The statistics of the year show continued advance, the Church members now numbering 11,785 and the travelling Preachers 60. Amongst those who began their course in 1782, Woolman Hickson's name was greatly endeared; his 'splendid talents shone the brighter by contrast with the shattered casket that enclosed them.' He rendered distinguished service in New York, and introduced Methodism to Brooklyn; but death terminated his course within seven years. Ira Ellis for thirteen years pursued the itinerant ministry with 'commanding ability'; Asbury attributes to him 'undissembled sincerity, great modesty, deep fidelity, and even temper, great ingenuity, and uncommon powers of reasoning.'

His contemporary, John Easter, was a son of thunder—'one of the most zealous, powerful, and successful Preachers Methodism ever had, "the Benjamin Abbott of the South"; instrumental in one of the greatest revivals of religion ever witnessed in Virginia.' At times hearers would fall to the earth in scores beneath his word. He brought to God a number of the men most eminent and useful in the Methodism of the next generation. The two Preachers last named, like many others of the early itinerants, were obliged to 'locate' in middle life, through family necessities.<sup>1</sup>

The 1783 Conference—held in two sessions at the same places as last year—recorded continued peace in the Societies and rapid growth. Thirteen thousand, seven hundred and forty was the number of Church members reported—an accession of close upon 2,000. The Circuits had increased to 39 in number. New York and Norfolk reappear on the list, in consequence of the withdrawal of the British troops. The itinerants were 82, instead of 60. It is noted that only 11 of the latter were married men; the hardships and penury in which they laboured forbade most of these servants of God a wedded life; marriage commonly entailed 'location.' This May Conference was happy in celebrating peace with England,

<sup>1</sup> The poverty of the early American Itinerants is pathetically indicated by the following bequest of one of them who died in 1793: 'I will that my wearing apparel be carried to the General Conference at Baltimore next; and that the same be distributed among the Preachers that have most need of it.'



which had been signed in the previous November. Three men of superior attainments and notable service now began to 'travel': Jesse Lee, the apostle of Methodism in New England and the first historian of the M.E. Church; William Phoebus, gifted with a philosophic mind and literary ability, who later in life practised medicine in New York; and Thomas Ware, another soldier of the Revolution, converted under Pedicord's influence, who became a choice preacher and pastor. Ware was rich in friendships, and left an autobiography which affords the best picture of the times and the men who moved in them.

A couple of extant letters of this date, from Asbury, one addressed to Shadford (inviting his return) and the other to Wesley, serve to throw light on the writer's views and position. To the former he wrote:

O America, America! I have loved, and do love, America. I think it became necessary . . . that Government should lose it. Your old national pride has gotten a blow; you must abate a little.

And to Wesley:

The present Preachers suffer much, being often obliged to dwell in dirty cabins, to sleep in poor beds, and for retirement to go into the woods. But we must suffer *with*, if we labour *for* the poor. As to myself, I can say, the Lord wonderfully gives, and wonderfully preserves, my natural and spiritual health. My soul is daily fed, and I find abundant sweetness in God. . . . I see the necessity of preaching a full and present salvation from sin. You know, sir, it is not easy to rule, nor am I pleased with it. I bear it as my cross; yet it seems that a necessity is laid upon me. Oh, pray for me, that I may be filled with light and power, with zeal and prudence, and, above all, with humility.

Little is recorded of the May Conferences of 1784, which were held for the third time at Ellis's preaching-house in Virginia and the Lovely Lane Chapel at Baltimore. A letter from Wesley to the American Preachers was read in which he admonishes them 'all to be determined to abide by the Methodist doctrine and discipline, published in the four volumes of sermons,' &c.; 'to beware of Preachers coming from Great Britain or Ireland without a full recommendation from me'; and 'not to receive any Preachers, however recommended, who will not be subject to the American Conference,' nor 'to receive any who make any difficulty in receiving Francis Asbury as the General Assistant.'

This communication attested both the jurisdiction of the American Conference and the authority of Asbury as its director ; but it conveyed no intimation of Wesley's plans for the future of the American Societies. The Church membership now numbered but 12 short of 15,000, eight-ninths of whom were found south of Mason and Dixie's line. Stricter regulations were made against negro slavery ; the enforcement of prohibition was becoming more and more difficult.

The establishment of peace was followed by a rapid western movement of population, which the Conference resolved to overtake. In the course of the following year Asbury for the first time crossed the Alleghanies. Three Local Preachers of notable gifts—William Shaw, Thomas Lakin, and John J. Jacobs, popularly named the ' three bishops ' had evangelized the mountaineer colonists, many of whom were refugees driven from home by the war. The Societies thus formed, and other Methodist outposts similarly established in the Western wilderness, were incorporated and brought into line with the general advance organized by Asbury.

Nearly the whole frontier march, from the extreme north to the Gulf of Mexico [writes Stevens] has been led on by these humble labourers. In few things was the legislative wisdom of Wesley more signalized than in providing the offices of Local Preacher and class-leader, a species of lay-pastorate which, alike in the dense communities of England and the dispersed populations of America, has performed services which can hardly be overrated. The history of the denomination affords a lesson in this respect that should never be forgotten by Methodists while Christendom has a frontier anywhere on our planet.

Isaac Smith, a brave officer in the war, who lived to be ' the oldest, and the most honoured and beloved, of all the Preachers . . . the St. John of the early Methodist apostolate,' in his later years a Missionary to the Red Indians ; Wilson Lee, who ' hazarded his life on all the frontier stations,' where ' savage cruelty and frequent deaths ' were to be encountered ; William Jessop, of whom Asbury wrote, ' Few such holy, steady men have been found among us,' are outstanding names amongst the new Preachers received in 1784. We have recalled, in such detail as our space allowed, the memory of Asbury's first helpers in the founding of American Methodism ; their record strictly belongs to the history of Wesleyan Missions. Enlisted and directed by the agent of Wesley and the British Conference,

these men were our earliest Native Missionaries, and a noble pattern to all the rest. Their names appeared up to 1787 upon the British *Minutes of Conference*. No more memorable names stand in that sacred register. From their memorials it would not be difficult to extract a series of biographies fully matching the *Lives of the Early Methodist Preachers*.

A few lines should be devoted to the course of affairs in New York, which was isolated from the rest of the American Societies by the British occupation until the close of the war. As we have intimated, the Wesley Chapel remained open throughout this period, by favour of the General in command. Many British soldiers worshipped there, and the closing of other Nonconformist churches, which were seized for military purposes, swelled the congregation. The Society was divided in politics ; but it so happened that its most influential laymen, including trustees of the Chapel, were Loyalists. The Preacher in charge at the declaration of war was the American Daniel Ruff. He was compelled to quit his post, and the Methodist flock was left shepherdless. From 1776 to 1783 New York is wanting on the Stations of the American Conference. Nevertheless the Society held together ; retaining the use of the chapel, it put John Mann into the pulpit as Local Preacher. He gave way to Samuel Spraggs, a decided Loyalist who had served for a short time in the itinerancy, and was driven from his Circuit by the Patriots. Spraggs appears to have been a good preacher and pastor ; he held together a congregation of very mingled elements, and competently filled the gap. The account-books of the Society, which have been carefully preserved, show that while the Church membership remained comparatively small, the public collections were large during this interregnum, and there was no difficulty about the Preacher's maintenance. At the close of the war Spraggs retired ; he became eventually an Episcopalian clergyman. John Dickens was appointed by Asbury first to assist, and then to succeed, him. The Society suffered heavily through the removal of the Loyalists, who fled to the remaining British provinces, but it appears soon to have recovered under the able ministry of Dickens, and New York became again an active centre of Methodism.

John Wesley was well informed, through Asbury and others, of the position in which American Methodism was found at the



close of the war. On the return of Rankin to England he had ceased to control its administration ; the direction assumed by Asbury devolved upon him, up to the Conference of 1783, solely by the vote of the American Preachers. That direction he had exercised, however, on strict Wesleyan principles ; in the matter of ' the ordinances ' he had restrained the Native Preachers at the risk of destroying his influence, while his sympathies were largely enlisted upon their side. Asbury's loyalty had been tried as by fire. He had known how to combine the seeming incompatibles—harmony with the new Methodism born in the struggle for national independence, and allegiance to Wesley and the British Methodist Connexion. Under his superintendence, since Rankin's last Conference (1777) the American Connexion, despite the losses and injuries received in the war, had doubled its membership. The reports showed a condition of efficiency in the Preachers, and of spiritual purity and fervour in the American Societies, not inferior to that of the home Connexion. Wesley did not hastily decide upon his course ; but when his decision was taken, he carried it out promptly, and as one resolved in a matter so responsible and weighty ' to know no man after the flesh.'

Wesley had made previous attempts to relieve, in more regular ways, the distress of the American Methodists. In 1780, subsequently to the action of the Fluvanna Conference, he wrote to Bishop Robert Lowth, in Ireland, begging him to ordain a Minister to officiate amongst the Newfoundland Methodists, but making a wider reference :

I mourn for poor America, for the sheep scattered up and down therein. Part of them have no shepherds at all, particularly in the northern colonies ; and the case of the rest is little better, for their own shepherds pity them not.

His lordship refused assistance. John Fletcher, of Madeley, had long shown a warm interest in the American work, and would have gone, with Wesley's consent, to supply the lack of service there but for his failing health. John Wesley consulted Fletcher on the emergency which had now arisen, while his brother Charles, whose unbending Church sentiments were well known, remained in the dark as to the plan in contemplation.



The letter which Wesley addressed to the American brethren in sending Thomas Coke and his companions on their errand, dated September 10, 1784, explains and justifies the step he was taking. It is found in the *Minutes of Conference* for 1785, under Question 20, 'What is the state of our Societies in America?'

Answer : It may best appear from the following letter<sup>1</sup> to DR. COKE, MR. ASBURY, and our brethren in North America :

1. By a very uncommon train of providences, many of the provinces of North America are totally disjoined from their mother country, and erected into independent States. The English Government has no authority over them, either civil or ecclesiastical, any more than over the States of Holland. A civil authority is exercised over them, partly by the Congress, partly by the Provincial Assemblies. But no one either exercises or claims any ecclesiastical authority at all. In this peculiar situation, some thousands of the inhabitants of these States desire my advice ; and in compliance with their desire I have drawn up a little sketch.

2. Lord King's account of the primitive Church convinced me, many years ago, that Bishops and Presbyters are the same order, and consequently have the same right to ordain. For many years I have been importuned, from time to time, to exercise this right, by ordaining part of our travelling Preachers. But I have still refused, not only for peace sake, but because I was determined as little as possible to violate the established order of the national Church to which I belonged.

3. But the case is widely different between England and North America. Here there are Bishops who have a legal jurisdiction. In America there are none, neither any parish Ministers,<sup>2</sup> so that for some hundred miles together there is none either to baptize or to administer the Lord's Supper. Here, therefore, my scruples are at an end, and I consider myself at full liberty, as I violate no order, invade no man's right, by appointing and sending labourers into the harvest.

4. I have accordingly appointed DR. COKE and MR. FRANCIS ASBURY to be joint *Superintendents* over our brethren in North America, as also RICHARD WHATCOAT and THOMAS VASEY to act as *Elders* among them, by baptizing and administering the Lord's Supper. And I have prepared a liturgy, little differing from that of the Church of England (I think the best constituted Church in the world), which I advise all the travelling Preachers to use on the Lord's day, in all the congregations, reading the litany only on Wednesdays and Fridays, and praying extempore on all other days. I also advise the Elders to administer the Supper of the Lord on every Lord's day.

<sup>1</sup> Wesley appends a characteristic footnote : ' If any one is minded to dispute concerning Diocesan Episcopacy, he may dispute. But I have better work.'

<sup>2</sup> This latter statement is not strictly accurate. A certain number of the English clergy remained at their posts in Virginia during the war. But the Church was disestablished, and their clergymen no longer held the status of ' parish Ministers.'

5. If any one will point out a more rational and scriptural way of feeding and guiding those poor sheep in the wilderness, I will gladly embrace it. At present I cannot see any better method than that I have taken.

6. It has indeed been proposed to desire the English Bishops to ordain part of our Preachers for America. But to this I object. (1) I desired the Bishop of London to ordain only one ; but could not prevail. (2) If they consented, we know the slowness of their proceedings ; but the matter admits of no delay. (3) If they would ordain them now, they would likewise expect to govern them. And how grievously would this entangle us. (4) As our American brethren are now totally disentangled, both from the State and from the English hierarchy, we dare not entangle them again, either with the one or with the other. They are now at full liberty simply to follow the Scriptures and the primitive Church. And we judge it best that they should stand fast in that liberty wherewith God has so strangely made them free.

JOHN WESLEY.

This historical document exhibits Wesley's grasp of the situation, the breadth and courage of his mind, and his power of clear, impressive, and diplomatic statement. His unaffected loyalty to the Church of England shines even in the uncanonical step to which circumstances have compelled him. He commends her liturgy to the new Church, though he dare not attempt to link it to her hierarchy. He sees that the American Methodists will not be ruled henceforth by any foreign government—not even by his own ; he does not pretend to command them, but ‘advises’ them on their own request. He ‘appoints’ for them ‘Superintendents’ and ‘Elders,’ empowering the latter to administer the Sacraments. Nothing is said here about the communications and perpetuation of these orders ; but the special ordination conferred on Coke, who was already an Anglican Presbyterian, together with the instructions given to Coke, fully warranted the two men in assuming this function as attaching to their superintendency, and justified the Baltimore Conference in adopting the designation ‘The Methodist Episcopal Church.’ Except on the theory of apostolical succession, which Wesley had pronounced ‘a fable,’ to all intents and purposes Coke and Asbury were Bishops to the Americans. The assumption of the title grieved and embarrassed John Wesley, and brought down on Dr. Coke Charles Wesley's stern denunciation ; but the Americans had done nothing more than ‘call a spade a spade’—they had substituted two syllables for five. To impute the

substitution to Coke's ambition is most unfair. In the *Book of Offices* which Wesley prepared for the Americans, the Anglican forms for the ordaining of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons were retained—unquestionably for its independent use, since he recognizes that America has been 'totally disentangled from the English hierarchy.' The American *Book of Discipline*, which was reprinted in London in 1786 under Wesley's eye, and without demur on his part, declared that

following the counsel of Mr. John Wesley, who recommended the Episcopal Church, making the Episcopal order elective, and the elected Superintendent, or Bishop, amenable to the body of Ministers and Preachers. Coke and the American Conference, in the substance of the matter, did nothing but carry out Wesley's intentions and principles.

At the same time, though Wesley had said, 'I am a scriptural *episcopos* as much as any man in England,' he shrank from the name *bishop* with pious horror.<sup>1</sup> Had the Americans realized the force of his repugnance they would, says Stevens, have avoided the obnoxious word so long as he lived.

When Wesley's proposals were first mooted to him in February, 1784, Thomas Coke was averse to them; the American Mission attracted him on other grounds, but the thought of violating Anglican order alarmed him. Wesley convinced him, however, that there was no other way to meet the crisis, and that Presbyterian ordination was practised in the early Church. After months of hesitation he yielded. Wesley summoned him to Bristol, along with Whatcoat and Vasey, who had volunteered for the service. James Creighton also joined the party, a Presbyterian of the Church of England, who served in the Methodist ministry for many years. At Bristol, on September 1, Wesley, Creighton, and Coke first ordained Whatcoat and Vasey as Deacons according to the Anglican rite, on the following day ordaining them 'Elders.' Then, on the latter date, Wesley and Creighton, in the presence of the newly made Elders, ordained Coke as 'Superintendent

<sup>1</sup> He wrote subsequently to Asbury (September 20, 1788): 'How can you, how dare you, suffer yourself to be called Bishop? I shudder, I start, at the very thought. Men may call me a knave or a fool, a rascal, a scoundrel, and I am content; but they shall never, by my consent, call me Bishop! End this!' See Wesley's *Works* (4th ed., 1841), Vol. XIII, p. 70.



of the Methodist Societies in America.' Certificates of ordination were furnished to the Superintendent and companion Elders.

Sixteen days later the three emissaries sailed from Bristol, bearing Wesley's letter above reported ; they landed in New York, after a tempestuous voyage, on Wednesday, November 3, and were received at the house of Stephen Sands, a leading member of the John Street Church. They made the acquaintance of John Dickens, then Preacher at New York, and Coke informed him of his errand. Dickens entered into the project eagerly, assuring Coke of the assent of the American Preachers and Societies.

Travelling south to find Asbury, Dr. Coke met him on Sunday, November 14, amid a moving scene, at Barratt's Chapel in Maryland.

After the sermon [writes Coke in his journal] a plain robust man came up to me in the pulpit and kissed me. I thought this could be no other than Mr. Asbury, and I was not deceived.

The hearts of the two men were instantly knit together. On learning Coke's business, Asbury called the nearest Preachers into council, and it was resolved to summon a Conference to meet with all speed.

We therefore [continues Coke] 'sent off Freeborn Garrettson, like an arrow, from North to South, directing him to send messengers to the right and left, and to gather all the Preachers together at Baltimore on Christmas Eve.'

In the interval Asbury was bent on turning his new colleague to account, and trying his mettle. 'He has drawn up for me,' adds Coke, 'a route of about a thousand miles in the meantime.'

Coke thoroughly ingratiated himself with the Americans. Thomas Ware writes of their first meeting :

His stature, complexion, and voice resembled those of a woman rather than a man ; and his manners were too courtly for me. So unlike was he to the grave and apostolic Asbury that his appearance did not prepossess me favourably, but before we parted I saw so many things to admire in him that I no longer marvelled at his being selected by Wesley to serve us in the capacity of a Superintendent. In public he was generally admired, and in private he was very communicative and edifying. . . . He was the best speaker in a private circle, or on the Conference floor, I ever heard. But his voice was too weak to command with ease a very large audience. Yet this he could sometimes do ; and when he succeeded in it, his preaching was very impressive. . . .



*Thousands* pressed to have their children dedicated to the Lord in baptism, and to receive themselves the Holy Supper at his hands.

Asbury writes a little later :

The Preachers and people seem to be much pleased with the projected plan ; I myself am led to think it is of the Lord. I am not tickled with the honour to be gained ; I see danger in the way. My soul waits upon God.

At ten o'clock on the morning of December 24 (Friday) the Conference, including 60 out of the 81 itinerants, met in Lovely Lane Chapel. Dr. Coke read Wesley's letter and opened his commission. It was unanimously agreed 'to form ourselves into an Episcopal Church and to have Superintendents, Elders, and Deacons.' On the motion of John Dickens the title 'Methodist Episcopal Church of America' was adopted. Asbury refused to accept the superintendency unless his brethren should endorse Wesley's appointment of him by their free choice ; whereupon Coke and Asbury were unanimously elected 'Superintendents.' The right of election to the Eldership and Diaconate was further asserted by the Conference, 'a negative voice' being allowed to the Superintendent. On three successive days (Saturday to Monday) Asbury was ordained Deacon, Elder, and Superintendent, through the imposition of the hands of Dr. Coke, assisted by Elders Whatcoat and Vasey. Mr. Otterbein, a friendly and much respected German Minister of Baltimore, took part in Asbury's final ordination. Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday were spent in framing rules of discipline. On Friday a number of Preachers were ordained Deacons. Saturday was devoted to the discussion of a project, started some time before by Dickens, for the founding of a Methodist College. On Sunday, the first day of 1785, twelve out of the previously ordained Deacons were made Elders. Thus 'we ended,' writes Whatcoat, 'our Conference in great peace and unanimity.' The measures to be taken had been carefully prepared by the two leaders in consultation, and no dissentient vote appears to have been cast in the whole proceedings. Never was there a more harmonious, rarely a happier, assembly. Coke writes in his journal :

I greatly admire the American Preachers. They are indeed a body of devoted, disinterested men, but most of them young. The spirit in

which they conducted themselves . . . was most pleasing ; I believe they acted without being at all influenced by friendship, resentment, or prejudice.

William Black, from Nova Scotia, records his impression :

Perhaps such a number of holy, zealous men never met before in Maryland ; perhaps not on the continent of America.

Hitherto the *Large Minutes*, the code provided by Wesley for British Methodism, had served as the disciplinary manual for America. This was now replaced by the enactments of the Christmas Conference, which were issued in the form of a *Book of Discipline* (published in 1785, and re-issued, with modifications, in 1787), supplying the basis of administration for the M.E. Church. In this directory the mode of appointment and the functions of the three orders of ministry are defined. The Superintendents (Bishops) are not only to preside at Conference, but to station the Preachers without appeal, and to exercise over them all necessary discipline from Conference to Conference, making it their duty to visit and supervise the Circuits within their province ; they in turn, and their official acts, are amenable to Conference correction. This episcopal power has no analogy in British Methodism ; it sprang from the autocracy of Wesley himself, reflected in the administrative powers which Asbury had exercised under the designation of 'General Assistant,' first conferred by Wesley on Thomas Rankin as his representative. Asbury had commended Episcopacy to the liberty-loving Americans, and taught them the advantage of direction by a great general, whose word should be law.

The Baltimore constitutive assembly styled itself 'the General Conference,' in distinction from the Annual Conference held for eleven years past. No order was at first taken for its repetition ; in fact, the General Conference did not meet again until 1792, when it became a normal part of the constitution, being made a representative house with legislative powers, to be convened henceforth quadrennially. The Annual Conference of the Preachers, instituted by Rankin, had in 1779 been divided into two locally separated gatherings, and this partition, due to convenience, had been continued. It was now decided, in consequence of the wide area of the Connexion, to hold three parallel Annual Conferences for ordinary Church

business. This number subsequently increased with the growth of the Church ; the multiplication of Annual Provincial Conferences made quadrennial General Conferences indispensable. The Quarterly Circuit Conferences, which had by this time become an important and popular feature of American Methodism, were put under regulation at the same time.

The rules bearing upon lay membership followed the accepted lines of English Methodism. The institution of slavery presented a formidable difficulty to American Methodism. The Baltimore legislators took the highest ground upon this subject, and laid down drastic regulations with a view to 'extirpate this abomination.' Alas, as Stevens relates, 'these rules produced much hostile excitement, and were suspended in six months !' Sixty years later the M.E. Church was rent into 'North' and 'South' over this unhappy question.

Dr. Abel Stevens goes too far in claiming 'the Wesleyan Mission Scheme' as 'an inspiration of the Christmas Conference,' for Coke's missionary dreams and schemes antedated his visit to America, and Methodism had taken root on other Transatlantic shores before this date. But admittedly his first voyage to America greatly stimulated Coke's ardour and enlarged his views ; the wonderful success of Wesley's Preachers in the United States encouraged enterprise at home, and impressed observant minds with the conviction that Methodism had a mission of the widest scope. It was after his return to England, in 1786, that Dr. Coke's plan for work overseas took definite shape. The planting of Methodist Missions in the West Indies was bound up with, though it did not originate in, Coke's visits to the American mainland. The appearance of William Black at Baltimore, and his appeal to Coke and the American Conference on behalf of Nova Scotia, secured immediate aid, and opened a channel between the Methodism of the new Republic and the spiritually destitute British provinces further north, along which blessing flowed for many years to come.

Francis Asbury was not yet forty years old when he reached, at the Christmas Conference, the culmination of his career. For thirty years more this patient, wise, heroic man continued to build on the foundation he had so strongly and broadly laid, toiling in frequent sickness, in voluntary poverty, and in homeless incessant wanderings. Coke was a passing visitor ;

Asbury remained the executive head of American Methodism until his death, which took place on March 31, 1816. By that time the Methodist Episcopal Church numbered above 700 itinerant Preachers and 211,000 members in its Societies—figures exceeding by threefold those reached by British Methodism at John Wesley's decease. During this length of years Francis Asbury infused himself into the whole fabric of the mighty community that had grown up around him. He travelled, it is computed, 270,000 miles, mostly on horseback, and often over the wildest mountain and forest tracks, in all seasons and weathers, preaching at least once a day; from east to west and north to south, he penetrated in all directions the vast and ever-growing country which he had made his own; he became, long before his death, the best-known and most beloved of all American citizens.

With the establishment of the national Methodism in the United States accomplished within twenty years after its beginning, the Societies formed on this area ceased to be missionary dependencies; they pass out of our History. We have narrated their formation, and the career of the great Missionary to whom their development was due, not only because of the magnitude of the results achieved and the extraordinary human interest attaching to the events and characters concerned, but also with a view to the abiding lessons to be learnt from this oldest colonial Mission of Methodism. The story supplies one of the most striking and instructive chapters in Church history, a chapter deserving deeper study than it has yet received.



### III

## BEGINNINGS IN NEWFOUNDLAND

Newfoundland and Great Britain—Mistakes in Government—The Beginnings of the Methodist Church in the Island—Lawrence Coughlan—Faithful Irish 'Leaders'—Wesley's Letter to Dr. Lowth—Coke's intended Visit to Newfoundland—Difficult Conditions of Work—Reduced Membership—Activity of Romanists—Reinforcements—Steady Growth of the Church.

NEWFOUNDLAND confronts the British Isles across the Atlantic, at a distance of little over 1,600 miles. It is a hand stretched out from the North American continent to grasp what the East may send. A sixth part larger than Ireland, and of triangular shape, Newfoundland fills the throat of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and commands, like a projecting bastion, that immense waterway. The commerce of the Canadian dominion passes along its northern or southern shores. The eastern coast is swept by the Arctic waters, laden with ice during the months of spring; these are met some distance from the shore by the warm oceanic stream flowing from the mid-Atlantic. For 300 miles south-eastwards 'the Bank' projects from the island, catching both these currents, and providing the ocean-dwellers in teeming multitudes with habitation and food. The coast is deeply indented, like that of Norway and Western Scotland, and furnishes abundant harbourage. The confluence of waters, pelagic and riverain, has combined with the configuration of the land to form on the Newfoundland coasts the most prolific fishing-ground in the world. The annual produce drawn therefrom at the present time is valued at over £2,000,000, of which sum the cod-fishing yields more than two-thirds. This treasure has determined the history of Newfoundland. Only towards the end of last century have the agricultural capacity of the island, and its very considerable mineral wealth, come to be appreciated. A great development awaits the country in these directions.

Newfoundland is the oldest, as well as the nearest, of the

British possessions outside of Europe ; it is our senior colony. There are legends of earlier visits by Scandinavian rovers ; but the definite discovery of the island was made in 1497, five years after the famous voyage of Christopher Columbus, by the Venetian captains, John and Sebastian Cabot (father and son), who sailed under commission from Henry VII of England. The Cabots struck upon Newfoundland in seeking for Cathay ! Other voyagers followed in their track, exploring the Gulf and River of St. Lawrence, and by the year 1517 as many as fifty European vessels were engaged in fishing off the Newfoundland coast ; but the formal possession of the island was not actually taken on the part of the British Crown till August 15, 1583. For this purpose Queen Elizabeth sent out the gallant Sir Humphrey Gilbert, the story of whose death by shipwreck on the return voyage is well known. Although the Newfoundland shores were now frequented in summer by hundreds of fishermen, no attempt was made at permanent occupation or regular government for thirty years after this date ; the coast is rugged and the seaward aspect of the land uninviting. In 1610 a company was formed of ' Adventurers and Planters of the Cities of London and Bristol for the Colony of Newfoundland,' and the first party of colonists was dispatched. At last in 1623, under Sir George Calvert (afterwards Lord Baltimore, and founder of the States of Maryland), a successful settlement was made. By the middle of the seventeenth century the European population was computed at 1,750, and 150 fishing-vessels are said to have resorted annually to the island from Devonshire alone. At the same time the French secured fishing rights, giving them a footing on the shore which became matter of long-standing dispute and brought danger and damage to the British occupation whenever the two countries were at war. St. John's, the capital of the island, was captured and destroyed by the French in 1696, but recovered under the Treaty of Ryswick in the following year. It was not, in fact, until 1904 that the Anglo-French fishery dispute was settled, under the Lansdowne-Cambon Convention, by England's buying out the territorial privileges of the French fishers.

The prosperity of the colony was even more impaired by the jealousies of the mother country. Originally the fishing was carried on by boats from Europe going to and fro for the season, whose men landed on the shore only to cure the catch and to

take provisions. This 'bank-fishery,' as it was called, was remunerative to English capitalists, and employed a large number of seamen; it became a valuable nursery for the British Navy. But the settlers also were chiefly fishermen; and as they multiplied, the 'shore-fishery' grew into a dangerous rival to the 'bank-fishery.' Alarmed by this competition, the English Government in 1674 took the extreme measure of prohibiting further settlement in Newfoundland, and enacted that 'no inhabitant' should be 'allowed to live within six miles of the sea, and that any person transgressing this law might be driven out of the country!' This monstrous legislation was put in force. A Commissioner was sent to deport the colonists, who in nearly every case lived within the six-mile limit. For two years the outrage went on, until the scandal of the cruelties resulting became so great that Charles II rescinded the order for expulsion. But the policy of protecting imperial at the expense of local interests continued to be pursued, with the effect of strangling the industry of the colony and breeding discontent and lawlessness, until, under William III, the restrictions put upon the Newfoundland fishing were removed, and the colony began at last to thrive. Regular government was still wanting. In 1633 an edict of Charles I provided that 'the master of the first fishing-vessel arriving at any port should be admiral of the same during the season.' This chance magistracy of 'fishing-admirals'—the strangest system of administration to which any free colony of Britain has been subject—lasted for more than a century. What kind of justice and order it produced may be imagined. Its effects on the civil condition of the settlers were long-lasting. After the recovery of Newfoundland from the French under the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, a local Governor was for the first time appointed by England; in 1729 its administration was separated from that of Nova Scotia. Gradually the island was brought under civilized control. A regular Judicature was in course of time established, and the jurisdiction of the 'fishing-admirals' came to an end. The long French wars of the revolutionary period brought Newfoundland a tide of prosperity and an influx of population. The fisheries were well protected, and their produce was in great demand; in 1814 the annual value of Newfoundland exports is said to have reached nearly £3,000,000 sterling, while its population was estimated at 80,000. In

1832 a Representative Constitution was granted to the people, and the political history of the country began, responsible government being set up in 1855.

The beginnings of Methodism here were simultaneous with its rise in the United States ; a slight priority is indeed claimed for the island. Here, as on the mainland, the pioneers were sons of Irish Methodism. *Laurence Coughlan* served from 1755 to 1765 as an itinerant Preacher under Wesley, originally of the Irish Connexion. Through Wesley's *Journal* we trace him 'travelling' at Colchester in 1758, and at Norwich in 1763. He was a thoroughly devoted man, and a Preacher of marked ability. According to Tyerman,<sup>1</sup> Coughlan was one of the Preachers who secured ordination in 1764 from the Greek bishop Erasmus, on which account he 'was put away from the Methodist Connexion' at the instance of Charles Wesley, as it would seem. He nevertheless retained John Wesley's friendship, and appears to have emigrated to Newfoundland in the year 1765 with his approval. In 1772 Coughlan writes of himself as having been for seven years a Missionary. He migrated to the new country, it appears, with a view to evangelical service, though in a lay capacity and on his own responsibility. He made his home at Harbour Grace, on the eastern shore of Conception Bay, a chief resort of the fisher-people. Here he began preaching at once (to use his frequent expression)—'crying aloud and sparing not.'

Newfoundland had been an object of the care of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel from the time of its institution at the beginning of the eighteenth century. For many years two clergymen had laboured under its auspices, in the parishes of St. John's (the capital) and Trinity Bay ; but they had made little impression on the general character of the people. Harbour Grace, and the extensive bay on which it stands, lies between the two stations above named, with 109 miles of rough sea intervening ; the traveller by land had to cover more than double this distance, over roadless, rugged, and solitary ground. Coughlan found no religious ministrations whatever on the shores of Conception Bay ; apart from the two parishes mentioned, churches and schools were wanting in the island. The settled population at this date was

<sup>1</sup> *Life and Times of John Wesley*, III., pp. 25, 26. Wesley writes of 'L. Coughlan' under date March 6, 1763, as 'his hearty helper' at Norwich. Later he refers to him less favourably (*Works*, XII., 117 ; XIII., 130).



computed at 7,000, while those visiting the coast for the summer fishing might be reckoned at another 5,000. The large annual invasion of European adventurers, on whose favour the residents were dependent, had for long a demoralizing effect upon the latter. The condition of the people is thus described by one who had the best opportunities of judgement :

Men who came from England had never seen a Minister since they left their native shore ; and those who had been born on the island had never seen one in their lives. The Sabbath was unknown ; there was none to celebrate marriage, and the marriage-vow was little regarded. Oppression, violence, swearing, debauchery, licentiousness, and every crime that can degrade human nature, sink civilized man to a savage, or even degrade him below the brute, was practised without a check ; in a word, the people were demoralized to an extent that could scarcely have been exceeded by the thunder-smitten inhabitants of Sodom's plain. Surely there was no place that stood more in need of a Missionary than did Newfoundland ; and few men were better adapted for that work than the man now sent.<sup>1</sup>

Coughlan's usefulness was increased by his command of the Erse language, which was spoken by many of the Irish, who formed a fourth part of the population fringing Conception Bay. These were mostly Roman Catholics. A hearer of Laurence Coughlan's thus reports of him many years after :

You cannot think what a state Newfoundland was in when that man of God first came amongst us. Imagine any sin you will, and you cannot think of anything too bad. He would sometimes describe the sins of the land in language that polite people would seem to be shocked at ; yet they knew that he was only speaking the truth.

However, Coughlan's ability and zeal were recognized on all hands ; his services were so far welcome that in 1767 a petition came from the inhabitants of Harbour Grace and Carbonear (a township four miles distant), addressed to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, that he should be appointed to their ministry. The request was granted, and the Bishop of London, at the instance of the Society and on the recommendation of Wesley and Lady Huntingdon, consented to ordain him. Coughlan visited England for this purpose in 1767. He returned to his post with the credentials of a missionary clergyman of the Church of England. But he continued without reserve, faithful to his former convictions.

<sup>1</sup> W. Wilson, *Newfoundland and its Missionaries*, p. 136; &c.

I am [he wrote to Wesley from Newfoundland, near the end of his ministry there], and do confess myself, a Methodist. The name I love, and hope I ever shall. The plan which you first taught me I have followed as to doctrine and discipline. Our married men meet apart once a week, and the married women do the same. This has given great offence, so that repeated complaints have been made to the Governor. But truth is mighty, and will prevail. . . . The Society (S.P.G.), I make no doubt, have many complaints about me, but in this I commit all to God. . . . We have about 200 communicants. . . . nor do I know of any who attend our Sacrament who have not the fear of God, and some are happy in His love. There are some also whose mouths God hath opened to give the word of exhortation. . . . My preaching in this land would do but little good were it not for our little meetings.

Evidently Coughlan was a thorough 'Church Methodist.'

For three years, according to his own account,<sup>1</sup> Coughlan preached in Harbour Grace and the neighbourhood with little or no visible fruit in the way of conversion. He was on the point of abandoning his Mission when, quite beyond his expectation, the people's hearts gave way. During the Church services, and at his house-to-house visitations and private meetings, confessions of sin and cries for mercy repeatedly broke out; many, both at Harbour Grace and Carbonear, came to the knowledge of salvation. The number of communicants was doubled within the year. Coughlan formed weekly classes on the Wesleyan model, and established a Methodist Society amongst the awakened. A storm of persecution now arose, stirred up by merchants<sup>2</sup> and magistrates, in which the old charge of 'madness' was flung at the Preacher and his converts. Subscriptions were withheld, and endeavours made by intimidation to put a stop to Coughlan's work. Accusations were laid against him with the Governor of the island; unless he was deceived, his enemies actually attempted his life by poison! But for several years he held his ground, effecting a considerable reformation amongst the fisher-folk on the shores of Conception Bay and founding a living evangelical Church. A third church fabric

<sup>1</sup> *Account of the Work of God in Newfoundland*, by the Rev. L. Coughlan, 1776. This short autobiography, dedicated to the Countess of Huntingdon, who appears to have taken the author under her wing on his return to England, contains little detailed information; it is made up chiefly of letters of religious experience from Coughlan's converts in Newfoundland, and death-bed narratives of a sensational kind.

<sup>2</sup> The 'merchants' (traders) were the only people of wealth and station in the infant settlements; the whole business of the colony passed through their hands, and the local fishermen were in their employ.

was built at Black Head, some twenty miles distant, with a Methodist Society attached to it, in addition to that at Harbour Grace and Carbonear.

Coughlan, however, had not the physical strength nor the coolness of temperament to sustain for very long the sort of conflict in which he found himself engaged. His health gave way under the strain, which was aggravated by the rigours of the climate ; he suffered, besides, from an infirmity fatal to happiness in this region of the world, and which forbade any wide extension of his labours. 'I had,' he writes, 'such dreadful apprehensions of the sea, when going on small boats, that my life was a continual martyrdom.' A timid sailor was not framed for a Newfoundland Missionary. In 1773 Laurence Coughlan resigned his charge and returned to England. He was for a while Minister of Cumberland Street Chapel in London, and subsequently applied for restoration to Wesley's itinerant ranks ; but he appears to have come, in some way or other, under a cloud. The closing reference to him is found in a letter of Wesley's to John Stretton (who will be mentioned immediately), under date February, 1785 :

The last time I saw Mr. C. he was ill in body, but in a blessed state of mind. He was utterly broken in pieces, full of tears and contrition for his past unfaithfulness. Not long after I went out of town God removed him to a better place.

Whatever the faults may have been of this impulsive and vehement Irish Preacher, he was the first to plant the standard of the Gospel in the oldest British colony ; his work lived and has borne imperishable fruit.

The Anglican successor, appointed after some delay to Coughlan's church at Harbour Grace and Carbonear, was a man of widely different principles ; he associated himself with the local magnates in their determination to extirpate Methodism. The campaign carried on against the first Methodists in many English parishes was renewed in Newfoundland. In most other colonies the relations between the Church of England and the Methodist Preachers were in the earliest days those of goodwill and kindness, not seldom of hearty alliance ; here they assumed, with no provocation on our side, an opposite complexion ; the humble witnesses for Christ were exposed not only to the violence of the profligate whom their rebukes

provoked, but to contempt and excommunication on the part of Churchmen and clergymen. It is with great regret that this historical fact is recorded.

Coughlan's flock at Harbour Grace would have been as sheep without a shepherd but for the exertions of a couple of leaders raised up in the emergency—John Stretton and Arthur Thomey. Both were Irishmen, Stretton's father and mother having been Methodists of Limerick, whose house Mr. Wesley had frequented. The son, removing to Waterford, engaged in the Newfoundland trade, the pursuit of which led him to settle in the colony, first at Carbonear in 1770, then a year later at Harbour Grace. He joined Coughlan's Society, and became his energetic helper. Arthur Thomey, formerly of Dublin, a resident merchant of Harbour Grace and a man of superior intelligence, had been amongst the firstfruits of Coughlan's ministry there. The latter enlisted him as a Local Preacher. Other faithful witnesses for Christ were raised up in the infant Society. Respecting one of these—a 'poor fisherman, the first' who 'boldly stood up and spoke in his Master's name'—Thomey writes :

I should have been glad that some of our modern fine witty gentlemen had been present. How doth God in His wisdom make use of the weak and foolish to confound the wise and mighty !

At Carbonear a merchant's clerk of the name of Thomas Pottle, led to Christ by the hands of Coughlan, 'after' (as he himself says) 'a long course of sin and vice,' proved the mainstay of Methodism at this critical moment. To Pottle's testimony was due the awakening of Pierre Le Sueur, the man who first brought Methodism into the Norman Isles.<sup>1</sup> Pottle called together a love-feast on Christmas Day, 1775, at which the Methodists of Carbonear were rallied after Coughlan's departure ; next year he took courage to preach, as Stretton did likewise after much hesitation. These men, in the winter season, when business was comparatively suspended, made preaching excursions within a radius of sixty miles from Harbour Grace ; they spread the light of the Gospel along Conception Bay, and to the shores of Trinity Bay to the north, and southwards as far as St. John's. But the original Societies in

<sup>1</sup> The Channel Islands have long been in close maritime intercourse with Newfoundland.



Coughlan's parish were decimated by the policy of his successor, who encouraged the intimidation directed against the Methodists by neighbours and employers.

A new helper came on the scene in 1775. This was *John Hoskins*, a poor Methodist schoolmaster who at the age of fifty-six embarked with his son from Poole, in Dorsetshire, hoping to find employment and a sphere for serving God in New England. He landed at Trinity Bay in Newfoundland, intending to stay in this island only till he could gather means to voyage farther; but God had work for him here. He was directed to Old Perlican, towards the head of this great inlet, where, he says, 'the people received me, and were glad of some one to teach their children, there being about fifty families in the place.' Before long he was invited to read prayers and a sermon on Sunday. He writes to Wesley about this :

I accepted the call as from God. I read the Church prayers, and some of your sermons, and sung your hymns—by myself alone for many weeks. For my congregation did not know how to behave in divine service, not even to kneel in prayer or sing at all; but would stand at a distance, and look at me as if I were a monster! And yet they called themselves members of the Church of England.

In a short time several persons were awakened, and sought Hoskins' counsel; he gathered them into a class-meeting, in which sixteen members were found when Thomey happened to come across to Old Perlican from Conception Bay, and joined hands with this welcome ally. He persuaded Hoskins to begin to preach on his own account. By this time the latter had abandoned the thought of going to New England.

Hoskins' influence and the power of his ministrations steadily grew. On Easter Day, 1778, a remarkable work of grace broke out in Old Perlican, resulting in the conversion of many souls, and this marked out Hoskins as a chosen vessel for the service of the Gospel. The inhabitants had a letter written to John Wesley asking him to get the schoolmaster ordained to be their Minister, as had been done in the case of Harbour Grace and Laurence Coughlan eleven years earlier. Hoskins visited England in the winter following, with this in view; but the then Bishop of London, Dr. Lowth, refused compliance, influenced probably by the representations made respecting the

Methodist stamp of Coughlan's work. Hoskins had to return to Newfoundland as he came. Grieved by this and other rebuffs of the same kind, Wesley wrote (August 10, 1780) a pungent letter to Dr. Lowth, in which he refers to the Old Perlican case in the following terms :

Mr. Hoskins asked the favour of your lordship to ordain him, that he might minister to a little flock in America. But your lordship did not see good to ordain *him* ; but your lordship did see good to ordain, and send to America, other persons who knew something of Greek and Latin [H.'s candidature had been repelled, ostensibly, on this ground], but knew no more of saving souls than of catching whales ! In this respect I mourn for poor America—for the sheep scattered up and down therein. Part of them have no shepherds at all, particularly in the northern colonies ; and the case of the rest is little better, for their shepherds pity them not. They cannot, for they have no pity on themselves ; they take no thought or care about their own souls.

This ill-advised refusal on the part of the English Bishops was a determining cause of Wesley's fateful decision, taken a few years later, to provide himself an ordained ministry for the Methodists of America.

Hoskins resumed his labours as schoolmaster-Preacher in Newfoundland. During their leaders' absence the Old Perlican Society had received a visitation of the Spirit of God which moved the whole neighbourhood, and was marked by depth as well as liveliness ; in the course of it Hoskins' own son (who perpetuated his work in the neighbourhood) found salvation. Island Cove, a village eight miles distant, caught the fire kindled in Old Perlican ; in a short time a Society of thirty persons was formed, and a church built here also. Arthur Thomey assisted at this revival with great effect, provoking the anger of a party of reckless Irish Romanists, who soon attempted his life. The zeal and success of the Methodist Preachers roused the baser sort to furious enmity. When Hoskins, in 1780, after his return from England, visited Trinity, the chief settlement on the bay of that name, a company of sailors in the harbour, instigated by their superiors, mobbed and tarred him. No one durst open his house for preaching, and the evangelist barely escaped with his life. Nothing daunted, Hoskins returned to Trinity in the next summer ; this time he secured a hearing, and established a preaching-place and a small Society in the town. Signal

retribution had fallen meanwhile on the chief actors in the outrage of the year before. Three years later he visited the important station of Bonavista, situated sixty miles northward along the coast ; from this place he reports to Wesley :

The people are willing that I should come and teach their children to read and write ; and perhaps by this means they will in time be inclined to receive the Gospel.

Here is an educational Missionary of primitive Methodism, approved and directed by the founder.

Thomey died, in the midst of his fruitful labours, in 1784, and Stretton was left alone at Harbour Grace. The work on Conception Bay—the most populous district of the island—had quite outgrown his strength, especially as he carried on an extensive business which required his full attention during the summer months. The Anglican persecution continued, and the Romanists had become alert and active opposers. Stretton wrote, therefore, to Wesley, laying the situation before him, and begging him to send a travelling Preacher to Newfoundland.

The work [he says] is at a stand here, and superstition and profaneness increasing ; we want one given wholly to the work. A Preacher should not be entangled with the affairs of this life. . . . I have been waiting to see the motion of the incumbent cloud, and dare not desert my post until lawfully discharged. Single and alone, the Lord has enabled me to withstand the whole place where I dwell ; and I am still preserved by the power of God. . . . Whoever seeks ease or comfort is not likely to meet much of it in this island.

Wesley's reply we append in full.

LONDON, *Feb.* 25, 1785.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—You did well in breaking through that needless diffidence ; if you had wrote sooner, you would have heard from me sooner. Although I have not been at Limerick for some years, yet I remember your father and mother well. They truly feared God when I conversed with them. Be a follower of them, as they of Christ.

If that deadly enemy of true religion, Popery, is breaking in upon you, there is indeed no time to be lost, for it is far easier to prevent the plague than to stop it. Last autumn Dr. Coke sailed from England, and is now visiting the flock in the midland province of America, and settling them on the New Testament plan, to which they all willingly and joyfully conform, being all united as by one spirit, so in one body. I trust they will no more want such pastors as are after God's own heart. After he has gone through these parts, he intends (if God permit) to see

the brethren in Nova Scotia, probably attended with one or two able Preachers, who will be willing to abide there. A day or two ago I wrote and desired him, before his return to England, to call upon our brethren also in Newfoundland, and perhaps leave a Preacher there likewise. About food and raiment we take no thought. Our heavenly Father knoweth that we need these things, and He will provide. Only let us be faithful and diligent in feeding His flock. Your Preacher will be ordained. Go on, in the name of the Lord and the power of His might. You shall not want any assistance that is in the power of your affectionate friend and brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

To Mr. John Stretton, in Harbour Grace, Newfoundland.

Dr. Coke found himself unable to visit Newfoundland ; nor, in fact, did he ever set foot in the northern colonies. But Wesley redeemed his promise to the islanders by appointing John McGeary to Newfoundland in the Stations for 1785. Stretton and his people received the Missionary with delight on his arrival in October, 1785, twenty years after Coughlan's first coming. The former reports of him as ' a good man and a good Preacher.' Simultaneously with Newfoundland, the American Conference makes its first appearance in the *Minutes*, as under the superintendency of Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury ; and the West Indies are first recognized, being represented by the single station of Antigua. In the returns for 1786 the Newfoundland Circuit is credited with a Church membership of 100 ; it is doubtful whether this figure includes Hoskins' flock along with the Societies of Conception Bay.

John McGeary was an Irishman by birth, who had ' travelled ' two years under Asbury's direction in the revolted colonies, and came over to England after the conclusion of the war. Wesley relates an interview with him in the *Journal* (October, 1784). In the following year he dispatched him to Newfoundland, after too brief a trial of his qualities. The Missionaries accompanying Dr. Coke across the Atlantic as designated for the northern colonies were diverted to the West Indies, and their places remained unfilled. McGeary was left alone. Though an earnest and faithful man, he lacked the powers of leadership, and proved unequal to the tasks of the pioneer in a field so rugged and wild. Within a month of his settling at Carbonear (where he made his head quarters) Stretton writes : ' Everything here appears so disagreeable to Mr. McGeary that I fear he will not abide long.' Contentions arose between the



Missionary and the lay leaders; Stretton and Hoskins also fell into disputings; and Wesley was grieved and embarrassed by the mutual complaints and recriminations. He writes to William Black (of Nova Scotia) early in 1787:

Poor John McGeary appears to be utterly discouraged, not only through want of success, but through want of the bare conveniences, yea, necessities, of life. Truly, if I could have supposed that those who made me fair promises would have suffered a Preacher to want bread, I should have sent him into other parts, where he would have wanted nothing.

How far this reflection on the Newfoundland Methodists was justified we can scarcely judge. Evidently they were disappointed in their Missionary, as he was in them. An ill-judged marriage completed McGeary's discomfiture, and he withdrew to England at the close of 1788, after having 'brought upon himself multiplied vexations, and a flood of reproach upon the cause.' About this time Wesley writes to Stretton:

I cannot find any union amongst you northern Preachers. John Hoskins, John McGeary, and John Stretton I should have imagined would have acted in concert; but, on the contrary, each seems to be afraid of the other. How is this? What is the true ground of this shyness?

McGeary returned to the field two years later, and William Black found him in charge on his memorable visit to Newfoundland in 1791. He finally retreated in 1792, and was appointed to an English Circuit; in the *Minutes* of 1793 his name stands on the list of those who 'desist from travelling.'

Methodism made little progress in Newfoundland under the conditions indicated in the last paragraph. At Carbonear a chapel and Preacher's house were erected during McGeary's pastorate, and Stretton in 1788 reared a chapel in Harbour Grace at his own expense. But the Society dwindled, and at the latter station seems for a while to have disappeared. Stretton speaks of 'Popery sweeping away' the people 'like a deluge.' Hoskins' work farther north proved in this time of trial more durable; he was a man of firm character, and his converts were probably better instructed than those of the other Preachers. He died on a visit to England in 1791, leaving a name revered in many a Newfoundland home. The Mission

of William Black, the apostle of Nova Scotia, in the summer of 1791 put a new heart into Newfoundland Methodism. Black had attended the American Conference of 1791 at Philadelphia, where Dr. Coke made arrangements with him for the missionary work in the northern colonies, which it had been Wesley's design to associate with the Methodism of the United States. Bishop Coke accordingly nominated Black 'Presiding Elder,' and added Newfoundland to his charge, at the same time drafting a number of American Preachers to assist Black in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Black was able to give less than a month to his visitation of the island, and failed to reach Old Perlican, but, wherever he moved, the fire of God kindled. The Societies were refreshed and reunited; troops of sinners were converted, including some of the most abandoned; and the people conceived such an affection for this messenger of God that he found it hard to tear himself away. Not less than 200 souls were 'added to the Lord' round Conception Bay in the course of this brief tour. Amongst those abidingly influenced by Black's visit was John Gosse, of Carbonear,<sup>1</sup> partner in a leading firm of merchants trading between Poole and Newfoundland, who was for many years a pillar of the Methodist cause in the island. Nor did Black neglect his administrative duties. He inquired into discipline, and put the Societies under Methodist rule; he had the Church property duly settled; he left behind him unity, confidence, order, where there had been despondency, division, and confusion.

McGeary, as we have seen, quitted Newfoundland soon after Black's visit, and for more than two years no Minister arrived to fill his place. Hoskins passed to his reward about the same time. The work went on. Stretton remained, animated now with a new spirit, and he was assisted by other lay helpers of remarkable power. Chief amongst these was George Vey, of Port de Grave, converted under Stretton's preaching, whose life and testimony were for more than forty years a benediction to the whole district where he lived; and John Barber, formerly a ringleader among Hoskins' persecutors—smitten by remorse and turning with his whole heart to God, attached himself devotedly to the man he had injured, and his energy and lively wit made him a telling witness of 'the faith of which he once

<sup>1</sup> This gentleman was uncle to the late Philip H. Gosse (father of Edmund Gosse), the well-known naturalist, who spent much of his early life in Newfoundland.

made havoc.' Stretton again set himself to secure an itinerant from England. This time—John Wesley being dead—he wrote to Robert Carr Brackenbury, the famous Lincolnshire Methodist squire and Preacher, whose evangelization of Poole (a seaport in touch with Newfoundland) had rendered his name familiar in the island. Brackenbury selected George Smith, who had been his own assistant; the nomination was approved by Dr. Coke and ratified by Conference. Smith arrived at Conception Bay in the middle of the year 1794. He proved himself a workman needing not to be ashamed, taking good care of the existing Societies while he carried the Gospel to new places, including Trinity Bay and Bonavista (where Hoskins had previously broken ground) in his far-ranging Circuit. He is described as 'a Methodist of the John Wesley type; a man of strong constitution, a good Preacher, deeply pious and of great zeal in the cause of Christ.' The failure of help from home Methodism, and the piteous necessities of the poor in the rigorous Newfoundland winter, induced Smith, after the example of Coughlan and Hoskins, to offer his services to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and to become a candidate for Anglican orders. He returned to England for this purpose in 1795, bringing a request for ordination signed by the magistrate and leading people of Bonavista; but a counter-petition coming from the opponents of Methodism, the English Bishop refused to lay his hands on the Preacher's head, though William Wilberforce interposed on his behalf. Smith's action was condoned by the Conference, and he was reappointed to Newfoundland in 1796, but placed under the direction of William Thoresby, a Preacher of eleven years' standing at home and of attractive talents. The latter, whose ministry was much admired in the colony, took charge of Carbonear and the older stations, while Smith resumed his pioneering in the direction of Bonavista, where he sought out the sheep unshepherded in the wilderness. Through failure of remittances from England the adventurous Missionary was left penniless during the ensuing winter, when he suffered severe sickness and distress; he was compelled to retreat homewards in the following May, and arrived in a state of destitution. George Smith had a brief and chequered course in Newfoundland, but his self-sacrifice and the power of his ministry left their abiding mark. The Methodism of Bonavista,

which survived his departure without a Minister for fourteen years, was his chief monument. Charles Saint, an intelligent young Englishman converted under Smith's influence, who served as class-leader at Bonavista, was the life of the Society during this period, and for many years subsequently. George Smith rendered thirty-five years' good service in the English itinerancy after his retirement from Newfoundland. Thoresby returned home in 1798.

Up to this time, for thirty-three years, Methodism had maintained in Newfoundland a most difficult existence. The conditions of religious work, both material and social, were of the severest kind, such as the strongest men could scarcely brave for any lengthened period. The colonial settlements were few and far apart, clinging to the deeply indented coast. Inland, the country was utterly wild and broken, full of rocks, forests, dangerous rivers, and swamps. Roads and bridges were everywhere wanting; horses were scarce, and only in possession of the richest. While the neighbourhood of the sea tempers the atmosphere, and the extremes of frost prevailing on the continent westwards are unknown in Newfoundland, the long winters are excessively stormy, and heavy snows, amounting sometimes to blizzards, are experienced. The rough and treacherous sea afforded the readiest conveyance for many of the itinerant's journeys. Travelling on foot loaded with his knapsack, he had to scramble over stony hills by uncertain paths, to thread tangled woods and wade ice-cold rivers, often lashed by wind and rain or blinded by the snow. To miss his way meant a probable death by want and exposure. The soil was uncultivated; and the land-fishermen, whose livelihood depended on the merchants through whose hands all trade passed, were unthrifty, and won a bare subsistence from the deep. Rude as their manners were, these poor folk were hospitable and faithful; they learnt to recognize in the Methodist Preacher their best friend, but pecuniary contribution was little in their power. With notable exceptions, which multiplied in course of time, men of property and station were persecutors of Methodism, their bitter injustice being too often supported or even inflamed by the resident clergy. For sheer hardship the work of the Newfoundland Mission in the early days has scarcely been surpassed.

Our Church membership in Newfoundland reached the



number of 510 under the ministry of Thoresby and Smith—its high-water mark for a considerable period. Dr. Coke and the British Conference from this time paid better attention to the island. James Bulpitt succeeded to Thoresby's superintendency, and laboured in Newfoundland, with Carbonear for his head quarters, from 1799 to 1807, when he was removed to Prince Edward Island. Bulpitt was a Londoner, but of scanty education ; he was a man, however, of excellent disposition and good abilities, and was valued by the people. In the year of his transference we find the membership suddenly reduced to 80 ; probably the sheep of the Methodist fold in outlying places had been scattered, and discipline lost, for want of visitation. Not till 1804 was a second Missionary granted to Newfoundland. This was John Remmington, an Irishman of lively temperament, winning personality, and devoted piety, who laboured chiefly in the district of Trinity Bay and revived the Societies established there by Hoskins. Though he was able to spend but six years in Newfoundland, this young missionary left 'in the hearts of all who knew him an imperishable memory.'

In 1808 the missionary staff was raised to three, and in 1812 to four, our constituency in the island slowly increasing and becoming more settled in its attachment. William Ellis and Samuel McDowell were the colleagues who joined Remmington in the former year, both enlisted from the Irish Conference, Dr. Coke's chief recruiting-ground. As in the case of others before him, McDowell's strength succumbed to the toil and rigour of the Newfoundland work, and he returned home after six well-spent years to fulfil a long subsequent ministry in his native land. Ellis was the first Methodist Preacher to complete his course in the colony ; he died at Harbour Grace in 1837, at the age of fifty-seven. Though not possessing the striking gifts of his fellow labourers, William Ellis had very serviceable and enduring qualities. He was uncommonly gentle and gracious, eloquent in speech, faithful and laborious, a model pastor and Superintendent ; 'much people was added to the Lord' during his ministry, and the work systematically extended in its range. A notable revival broke out under McDowell's preaching in the winter of 1810-11. William Ward was sent out to succeed John Remmington in 1810. This young man was the first Missionary stationed at Bonivista, where he entered into George Smith's

early labours ; but, alas, he was drowned in sailing to St. John's within two years—the first Methodist Missionary to die on these shores.

While Methodist work continued to make gradual advance in Newfoundland, little was done there by other Protestant Churches, and irreligion was rife. So late as 1815 there were but three Anglican clergymen in the island, who rarely overstepped the round of their parish duties. In 1787 this colony was made a part of the diocese of Nova Scotia, but it was forty years after that date before any Nova Scotian Bishop set foot in Newfoundland. A Congregational Church of some strength existed in St. John's, and the London Missionary Society for a few years carried on excellent work within a limited area. For the rest, the cause of Protestant faith in Newfoundland depended entirely on the slender and ill-supported band of Methodist itinerants. The Romanists found their opportunity in this condition of things. The French settlements on the southern coast had given Rome a foothold early in the eighteenth century, and the annual resort of French fishing-boats brought many priests to the island. A considerable Irish contingent, chiefly of the Roman confession, was also mingled with the nominally Protestant English folk. Roman Catholic priests pushed their advantages with a zeal and hardihood worthy of all praise. In their propaganda the early Preachers found an opposition that was bitter and able, and almost ubiquitous. The letters of the Missionaries teem with complaints and appeals upon this subject. It was at this time, in the dearth of Protestant ministrations, that Popery secured the powerful hold upon Newfoundland which it retains to the present day, when, according to the latest returns, it holds the allegiance of more than a third out of the total population of about a quarter of a million, the Church of England coming second in numbers, and Methodism third, with rather less than a fourth of the people amongst its adherents. In default of other Christian worship, whole settlements and districts, peopled by the children of British Protestants, during the early decades of last century gave themselves to the Roman priesthood. Three hundred and forty Wesleyan Church members, with four Missionaries, were reported to the Conference of 1813.

In this year Sampson Busby, a Yorkshire farmer's son, <sup>died</sup>

makes his appearance on the Mission Stations. On his arrival William Ellis put Busby in charge at Carbonear, himself proceeding to the outstation of Bonavista, where he found 1,200 Protestants with no regular provision for public worship beyond the reading of prayers on the Lord's Day morning by a storekeeper of indifferent character. He revived the Methodist cause here, kept alive by Charles Saint in this lonely spot, and made Bonavista the centre of a wide and well-directed missionary Circuit. Busby, Ellis's curate at Conception Bay, acquitted himself excellently. Mrs. Busby, 'an accomplished and deeply pious lady,' was as useful a Missionary as her husband. Hitherto 'it could scarcely be said that there was a School of any kind' for girls along the whole north shore; people of means who desired education for their children had to send them to England. Mrs. Busby remedied this defect by opening at Carbonear an efficient Ladies' School; she was the founder of women's education in the colony. Her premature death, in 1817, led to Sampson Busby's transference to Prince Edward Island. We shall meet him in a subsequent chapter.

The establishment of the Missionary Society in British Methodism during the years 1813 to 1818 brought about the much-needed reinforcement of the staff in Newfoundland. McDowell, on his return home in 1814, was replaced by two excellent young Missionaries—the Welsh John Lewis and the Lancashire John Pickavant. The former, who planted a new and fruitful Methodist centre at Burin, on Placentia Bay, in 1817, was obliged to return home after six years' good service in Newfoundland; the latter gave the strength of his life to the colony, and became the greatly respected chief of Newfoundland Methodism, occupying for nearly twenty years the chair of the District. Pickavant is described as 'a master in Israel, gentle and gentlemanly, and in his own pulpit an orator at once charming and subduing.' In 1815 the number of Missionaries was raised to six by the accession of the brothers Hickson—James and Thomas. These valuable men, who were the nursing-fathers of a number of important churches, gave nine years of labour to Newfoundland Methodism. With their coming it became possible to give the Newfoundland Mission its proper status; it was now detached from the District of Nova Scotia, whose Chairman could give it no effective



supervision. William Black's visit of 1791 in this capacity had never been repeated. William Ellis, stationed at Black Head, was the first-appointed Chairman. The two Hicksons were posted at Bonavista and Port de Grave, Pickavant at St. John's, Lewis at Island Cove. Four out of the six Circuits, it may be observed, radiated from Conception Bay, where Laurence Coughlan had landed fifty years before.

At the same date the St. John's Circuit was commenced. Hitherto this town—the one place of town-size in the island (it numbered about 5,000 inhabitants)—had only received occasional visits from the itinerants. The Congregational Church there supplied the want of evangelical preaching, and our Missionaries judged themselves to be more needed elsewhere. The London Committee, however, in 1811 called the 'particular attention' of its agents to St. John's. Some Methodist residents had settled in the capital, and its harbour was the chief resort of the summer fishing-fleet and of trading vessels from all quarters. Moreover, St. John's had a considerable garrison, and Methodism has always felt a special care for the British soldier. In the spring of 1815 a small Methodist chapel was built, and the following autumn saw John Pickavant in charge of the Society gathered about it; his ministry gave a happy beginning to the infant Church of St. John's. In 1815 the Society membership in the island was computed at 460.

Methodism carried on about this time a determined contest in Newfoundland for the observance of the Lord's Day, which the necessities of the fishermen's calling were supposed to supersede. Some extraordinary providences occurred in vindication of God's ordinance, which deeply impressed the islanders. Amongst other such incidents, the following is related by Wilson in his *Newfoundland and its Missionaries*:

A young Methodist captain from Carbonear, lately converted to God, took his crew out seal-hunting. The dawn of a fine Sunday morning showed near the ship a large ice-floe covered with seals. His men prepared to attack the animals, when the master peremptorily forbade them, much to their chagrin, urging God's commandment. Another schooner came along, and in the course of the day took 500 seals off the ice; but the excessive brilliance of the sun affected the eyes of the Sabbath-breakers. Monday morning came; the floe was still there, and the seals crowded on it more numerous than before. The Methodist



captain now set his men to work, who in three days loaded their vessel with 1,600 seals, while the rival crew were disabled by snow-blindness.

Such stories spread through Newfoundland, and helped to create a new conscience about the sacred day.

Six more Missionaries were dispatched to Newfoundland in 1816; but for the withdrawal of Busby, and the temporary removal of Ellis to Bermuda, due presumably to considerations of health, the staff would have been doubled; it remained at about the figure now reached until 1840. John Bell—the first of that name in the Wesleyan ministry, and the senior amongst the recruits—took Ellis's place in command of the District, and remained its Chairman for a number of years. The recruits now drafted to Newfoundland were picked men, and each of them was an acquisition. Next to John Bell, the most notable of the six was George Cubitt, who for learning and intellectual power in the pulpit had no equal upon the island. He was stationed at St. John's, where his preaching was well adapted to combat the prevalent infidelity,<sup>1</sup> and won the most thoughtful people of the town. A Captain Vicars, of the Royal Engineers, stationed in the garrison, who had been up to this time a professed deist and man of pleasure, under Cubitt's ministry was soundly converted. He married a Methodist lady of the island, and became the father of Captain Hedley Vicars, the Christian soldier of the Crimean War, whose biography was so widely read a generation ago. Cubitt's sensitive nature suffered extreme distress through the financial collapse and famine that befell St. John's in 1817, followed by the disastrous fire (the first of a series devastating this luckless town) in which the new Methodist chapel was consumed. Under the strain his strength gave way utterly, and he returned to England shattered for the time. But he recovered, and resumed the itinerancy at home; the closing years of his ministry (ending in 1850) he spent as Connexional editor in literary labours, for which he had a special gift. George Cubitt did a great work in Newfoundland in a short time. John Walsh, like John Bell, devoted nine years of his ministry to Newfoundland; Ninian Barr, ten years. Walsh had been brought up in Lancashire for the Roman Catholic priesthood, and was said to retain much

<sup>1</sup> It was said that at this period 'Tom Paine had more authority among the intellectual folk in St. John's than the Bible. The most detestable opinions were unblushingly advocated by individuals holding important positions in society.'

of the priestly manner ; but his preaching had a rich evangelical savour, and brought blessing to many souls. Barr was a son of Scotch Presbyterianism, whose talent and energy, animated by a buoyant spirit, made him widely useful ; his voice was memorable for sweetness and power. His descendants preserve his name and honour in British Methodism. John Haigh, a native of Leeds and a spiritual child of William Dawson, laboured for twenty-one years in the island, travelling with acceptance most of its Circuits, and witnessing nearly everywhere revivals of religion. Amongst the newcomers of 1816, Richard Knight (afterwards Dr. Knight) was destined to give the fullness of a long and strenuous life to colonial Methodism. He was one of the famous Devonshire breed—of stalwart frame and enduring fibre, strong in mind and soul as in body, the greatest man that God gave to our Church in Newfoundland. In him business ability was associated with commanding spiritual power ; he served as Secretary to the Newfoundland District during most of his early ministry. After sixteen years of labour here Knight was removed to the mainland, where he presided successively over the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Districts, and took a leading part in the formation of the Conference of Eastern British America (including Newfoundland), which came about in the year 1855. Richard Knight will present himself again in a later chapter.

From the time of this reinforcement—a first-fruit of the planting of the Missionary Society at home—the Newfoundland District was set upon a proper basis, and assumed its settled character and organization. Eleven Circuits are mapped out in the report for 1817, extending from Burin and Fortune Bay, near the middle of the south coast, to Bonavista, toward the north-east, over a stretch of five or six hundred miles by sea, and touching most of the important fishing-stations. Our Church membership, as naturally was the case amongst a shifting population, was comparatively small ; but it had nearly doubled its numbers in the last five years, and had commenced a course of solid growth. Methodist order was now established, and pastoral supervision was carried out. Sabbath Schools were set on foot in every preaching-place where persons of any intelligence could be found to act as teachers ; in the absence of general education, these promoted to an incalculable degree the mental as well as the religious

welfare of the poorer people.<sup>1</sup> The stage of roving, casual evangelism was over, and the Newfoundland Societies, since acquiring a centre in St. John's, had gained the stability of a recognized provincial Church. Except at outlying points, and in violently Romanist areas, open persecution had ceased. Slowly, and under extreme difficulties, Methodism had won its footing, and won for the Gospel popular hearing and reverence throughout Newfoundland. The gross and almost heathen ignorance which Coughlan and Hoskins found on the island half a century before had been dispelled. Improved administration, and better attention on the part of the home Government, had contributed, along with Christian teaching, to reform the state of civil society, and to repress the crime with which this ill-used colony had been rife. The population was now estimated at 90,000 souls, less than half of whom were reckoned as Protestants. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel at this date employed five Missionaries in the island. The reference in the Newfoundland section of the report of this Society for 1818 to 'fanatic preachers'—an allusion ridiculous when aimed at such men as George Cubitt and Richard Knight—indicates the animus still felt by the mother Church in the colony toward those who were supplying her lack of service.

We have dwelt on the names and doings of the missionary pioneers in Newfoundland; it is not necessary to particularize with like detail in the case of their successors. The ministerial staff was maintained at much the same standard for forty years onwards from 1816, and the Circuits as then planned were built up, and extended in area as their strength grew, with little addition to their number. Amongst the most notable appointments of the years immediately ensuing were those of William Wilson (1820) and Adam Nightingale (1823). Wilson was a Lincolnshire youth, of the serious, quietly devoted, competent, and reliable sort, which the Methodism of that county has tended to produce. He laboured in Newfoundland and the adjoining Districts for close on half a century, and became the venerated Nestor of Methodism in this region. The history of *Newfoundland and its Methodism* from which we have so freely quoted, written to commemorate

<sup>1</sup> A local Missionary Society—the earliest in Methodism outside of Great Britain—in 1816 was a grateful sign of vital development; in its first year this Auxiliary sent home to the Mission House a sum of above £30, out of the 'deep poverty' of the District.

the centenary of our Church in the island (1865), came from William Wilson's pen. Adam Nightingale—a man notable for his intrepid courage and his singular power in prayer—bore the burden of the day in the Newfoundland ministry side by side with William Ellis and John Pickavant for many years. He alone out of the men of the twenties appears on the Newfoundland Stations in 1855, to take his seat in the Conference of Eastern British America which then came into being. From the date we have now reached the Newfoundland Mission came into continually closer touch with the Methodism of the mainland colonies, and events moved forward to the amalgamation.



## IV

### IN NOVA SCOTIA AND NEW BRUNSWICK

The Struggle between French and English—Acadia—Cruel Administration—Yorkshire Immigrants—William Black—The 'Newlights'—Influx of Loyalists from the States—Freeborn Garrettson—John Allison—Anglican Sympathizers—William Black ordained 'Elder'—Nova Scotian Relation to the Methodist Episcopal Church—New Brunswick—Call of Duncan McColl—Difficulties arising from Connexion with the Episcopal Church—Prominent Methodist Laymen—Revival in Nova Scotia—Marked Increase in Church Membership.

THE southern coast-lands of the Gulf and River of St. Lawrence, including Cape Breton Island, the peninsula of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island, were first seized by French explorers, who spread in a slender, broken line of settlements from Cape Breton to Montreal, interposing between the British colonies of Newfoundland and New England. With French occupation came the Jesuit Missionaries, who laboured with indefatigable zeal in North America, and were the first to preach Christ to the Indian tribes. From the time of the earliest colony in Acadie,<sup>1</sup> which was founded in the year 1604 at Port Royal (afterwards Annapolis), on the eastern side of the Bay of Fundy, until 1713, when, by the Treaty of Utrecht, Nova Scotia was ceded to Great Britain, a constant struggle went on between the two great powers for the command of the seaboard. Cape Breton Island remained in French hands till the capture of the fortress of Louisberg in 1749; by the Treaty of Paris (1763) the whole possessions of France in this region, including Canada, were given over to Great Britain. The French population, for the most part, remained, becoming loyal British subjects; the descendants of the original colonists may be found to-day on Cape Breton

<sup>1</sup> *Acadie* (Acadia) was the French name for Nova Scotia—the latter title appears first in Letters Patent of James I authorizing the establishment of a Scottish settlement on the peninsula in 1624, which soon, however, came to grief. The English, on capturing Port Royal in 1710, renamed the little town *Annapolis* in honour of Queen Anne. This remained the capital of Nova Scotia until the founding in 1747 of Halifax, on the eastern coast, designed in the first instance as a counterpoise to the French naval port of Louisburg, in Cape Breton Island.

Island, in New Brunswick, and along the whole length of the St. Lawrence banks ; in Lower Canada they form a solid block of French-speaking and Roman Catholic citizens of the dominion.

One melancholy exception to the above statement the truth of history compels us to make. The settlers (*habitans*) of Acadie accepted British rule in 1713, and lived prosperously under it ; they were a simple rural folk, contented and well conducted ; few of them at any time abetted the intrigues and raids by which the French attempted to recover the lost territory. One thing they steadily and unanimously refused, viz. to bear arms against their kinsmen and co-religionists ; the Treaty of Utrecht had expressly exempted them from such liability. The local Government nevertheless insisted on administering to the Acadians the oath of allegiance to the British crown without this qualification ; they honourably declined. Seeing no way of escape, they prepared to quit peaceably the colony their industry had created, and to seek an asylum elsewhere. The Government prevented the voluntary exodus, fearing an accession of strength to neighbouring French dominions, and deported the people wholesale, confiscating their property and burning their homesteads, to the British colonies farther south, where it landed them in isolated groups to seek a living as best they might. In doing this Governor Lawrence devised, on the plea of military necessity, the exquisite cruelty of breaking up the exiled families and separating their severed members as widely as possible, so that the Acadian community, which consisted of about 7,000 souls, might be thoroughly dissolved. A large proportion of the expelled perished in the process. Longfellow's poem of ' *Evangeline* ' is based upon this crime, which took place in 1755—a shameful blot on the records of the British Empire. The final act was unauthorized by the British Government at home ; indeed, orders were sent to forbid it, but they arrived too late. No measures were taken to redress the monstrous wrong, nor to punish its perpetrators. The lands thus appropriated—the richest in the province—were stocked with British colonists ; and the few Acadians who, at the close of the war with France (1763), struggled back to their homes, found them occupied by strangers, and had to clear for themselves new settlements in the province. A

considerable number made their way to join their compatriots on the banks of the St. Lawrence.

Strenuous efforts were made by the Government in early days to open the resources of the country and people it with men of English blood. Farmers and fishermen were planted along the coast. The Scotch county of Pictou was formed on the north shore, the German of Lunenburg on the south-east ; county Sunbury was created in the heart of the region afterwards named New Brunswick. Yet previously to the War of Independence the English-speaking population remained comparatively sparse ; to a great extent it consisted of migrants from the poorer lands of New England, who in many instances sympathized with the American rebellion, and risings here and there were attempted which gave the Government considerable trouble. The conclusion of the war brought to the colony a large incursion of the defeated party, including discharged soldiers and others who maintained allegiance to the mother country, which served greatly to strengthen the British interest.

➤ Most of the United Empire Loyalists (as they called themselves) who fled to Nova Scotia were planted in the vacant country lying west of the peninsula across the Bay of Fundy, to which the name of *New Brunswick* was given (now formed into a separate province). Their coming more than doubled the population of the maritime provinces. Other divisions of the Loyalist refugees, whose numbers amounted to 40,000 in all, migrated north-westwards to settle along the upper St. Lawrence and on the shores of Lake Ontario ; these furnished the nucleus of the colony of Upper Canada. For some time a stream of immigration of this nature flowed from south to north ; the British patriotism of the Canadian dominion took its colour from this current. Amongst the new-comers there was a sprinkling of decided Methodist families, along with others touched by the evangelical influence that had spread fast through the revolted States in the years during and before the war. To their arrival, about the year 1783, the beginnings of the Methodist movement in Canada and the maritime provinces must be largely traced. The fresh elements introduced at this time into the life of Nova Scotia included a body of fugitive negroes, who had taken refuge from their masters with the British forces, many of them joining the colours, a

good proportion of these also being Methodists. The bulk of the freed Blacks of Nova Scotia, finding the northern climate unsuitable, were ultimately domiciled in Sierra Leone, on the establishment of that colony; from the seed of Gospel faith they carried with them the Methodism of West Africa had its birth.

About the time the war broke out, in the years 1772-75, a body of Yorkshire farmers settled on lands sold to them in Cumberland County, the western division of the peninsula, bordering on (the later-named) New Brunswick. These were, for the most part, men of character and standing, and of some capital, attached to the British Constitution and prepared to stand by it amid the stirrings of sedition and the alarms of invasion which were rife during the next ten years. Prince Edward Island (till 1799 known as the Isle of St. John) had been parcelled out by Government in grants made to retired soldiers and colonial officers, a large proportion of whom were Scotch; it is said that at the close of the century a third of the family-names of the island began with *Mac*! Cape Breton Island, on the other hand, was occupied chiefly by French and Indians, who, while they held aloof from the rebels, could not be expected to aid actively the King's Government.

Amongst the Cumberland settlers there was a group of Methodist families; from this circle the leader of Methodism in the maritime provinces was raised up. William Black, of Huddersfield, after reconnoitring the country in 1774, bought an estate at Amherst, a township on the north-western border, whither he emigrated in the spring of the next year with his wife, his four sons, and one daughter. This gentleman was a friend of Wesley's, who, on hearing of his removal to America, deprecated his 'going from a place where he was much wanted.' At this date William Black the younger, the second son of the house, was fifteen years of age. The mother, who was a woman of earnest piety, died soon after reaching America; the family, as too often happens in change of habitation, or after such a loss, let their religion slip, and fell into the dissipations of colonial life. Some of their Methodist neighbours, happily, continued faithful, and without a Minister carried on prayer-meetings and class-meetings, with occasional preachings, in their own houses. The names of William Wells, John Newton, and the Oxley family deserve record amongst those of the first Methodists in Nova Scotia.



An awakening influence came upon these little gatherings in the winter of 1778-79. Young William Black and his elder brother John began to attend the prayer-meetings held at Mr. Oxley's house; and the first-named, who cherished his mother's memory and was conscious of the workings of the Spirit of grace upon him from childhood, came under strong conviction of sin, which issued by the spring of 1779 in his thorough conversion to God and joyful confession of the Saviour. Soon the whole household was brought into the same light of salvation. William Black's was a typical Methodist experience. He relates the great change in his diary. After describing the mental distress he had suffered for many weeks, he writes :

We continued, on a certain evening, singing and praying about two hours, when it pleased the Lord to reveal His suitableness, ability, and willingness to save me, so that I could cast my soul upon Him. While our friends were singing,

My pardon I claim,  
For a sinner I am—  
A sinner believing in Jesus's name!

I could then claim my interest in His blood, and lay hold on the hope set before me—the Lord my Righteousness. Instantly my burden dropped off, my guilt was washed away, my condemnation was removed; a sweet peace and gladness was diffused abroad in my soul; my mourning was turned into joy, and my countenance, like Hannah's, told my deliverance—it was no more heavy! After returning public thanks, I went home praising God. All my song was: 'Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!'

This story represents the man; William Black's conversion to the knowledge of Christ gives the key to his life-work, as much as in the case of the Apostle Paul or of John Wesley. A little later he writes :

Jesus all the day long  
Was my joy and my song.

Everything conspired to make me happy. The heaven above, the earth beneath, sparkled with the Creator's glory; all creation seemed to smile upon my soul. The fields broke forth into singing, and the trees clapped their hands. In man and beast I saw the wisdom, power, and goodness of God shine conspicuously. I was filled with wonder, and felt the utmost tenderness and love for every creature God had made. . . . I felt a peculiar love for souls. I seldom passed any man, woman,

or child without lifting up my heart to God in their behalf ; or passed a house without praying for all in it.

Here was manifestly ' a chosen vessel '—a man whose eyes God had opened, and whose heart He had filled with Himself.

In 1780 the youthful convert began to exhort in the local meetings. His utterance made a lively impression, and as the revival continued and spread in the District he was invited to speak in many places. Gradually his exhortations grew into regular preaching. He had an engaging presence and voice, a good natural address, and a fine flow of soul and of speech. He was not without education, having been trained in his boyhood at the school conducted for many years by his mother's brother, Mr. Stocks, of Otley, in Yorkshire. Though books were scarce and opportunities of study very limited at Amherst, he made the utmost use of the time and means available ; in the course of years William Black became, though self-taught, genuinely proficient in sacred learning. His ardour and liveliness of feeling were regulated by judgement and a balanced mind—the Yorkshire ' mense<sup>1</sup> and sense ' ; he could teach and reprove as well as exhort ; sanity and reasonableness were as manifest in his preaching as warmth and vigour of imagination. In 1780, in conjunction with three other young men, he formed of his own accord a plan for regular preaching in the neighbourhood of Amherst. So convinced was he of his call to preach the Gospel that, on coming of age fifteen months after his conversion, he gave up every other business, mounted horse to leave home, and commenced the first of itinerations through the scattered hamlets and towns of the colony, extending over an area of 50,000 square miles, which ended only with the cessation of his active life. Here was a ministry originating *de novo*, like that of John the Baptist or Saul of Tarsus, with no ecclesiastical warrant, no human authorization beyond that of the handful of humble Methodist folk who invited and approved the youthful Preacher ; but never was a ministry more emphatically owned of God in the fruits it yielded. By the summer of 1781 two hundred people were meeting in Methodist classes within Cumberland county.

At the time when Black commenced his course, the population of Nova Scotia, including New Brunswick (then a mere

<sup>1</sup> Manners, tact, right feeling.

county of the older province), was estimated at about 12,000 ; in a few years it was doubled by the incoming of the Loyalists. Some half-dozen clergy ministered in small and isolated town ✓parishes. Like their brethren in Newfoundland, these were planted by the English Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and supported by grants commonly made in land from the Provincial Government. Their qualifications, for the most part, were such as those described by Wesley in his letter to Bishop Lowth. Charles Inglis, the first Anglican Bishop of Nova Scotia—formerly curate in New York and a subscriber to the building of Wesley Chapel there—was, however, an excellent man. Congregational Churches existed in the colony, founded by the settlers from New England, and drawing their Ministers from that quarter ; the deadness which had earlier come upon Congregational piety in America continued to affect their communion in Nova Scotia. The Scottish colonists had imported several Presbyterian Ministers, who were generally useful men. A single Baptist Church maintained a vigorous life ; but its evangelical testimony was associated with a hard and combative Calvinism. The old French *habitans*, still numerous in Cape Breton Island, had their priests, who were in some cases notably active and devoted men. But there were a multitude of the nominally Protestant population, especially in the newer settlements, and the secluded parts of the colony, who remained without religious ordinances, and were sinking into ignorance and vice. The Methodist itinerancy was designed to reach these sheep without a shepherd ; their crying need, and the heart and mind to supply it which God had given to William Black, were his sufficient call.

For some time he laboured alone. His earlier journeys were confined to the west of Cumberland county, including the towns of Windsor, Horton, and Falmouth, and to the Petitcodiac valley across the New Brunswick border, where Methodism soon struck root. In these districts and the country between lay numerous settlements in which the Preacher found hospitality and an open door for the Gospel. His name and family were known ; his bearing and kindly tact were themselves an introduction. Here and there he came across old Methodists, some of whom—like John Smith, who lived near Windsor, formerly precentor for Wesley when

he preached at Yarm, in North Yorkshire—had formed little centres of fellowship, and kept religion alive about them, while in others the smouldering embers were rekindled by the breath of the Lord coming from the lips of this glowing evangelist.

Quickly the range of Black's tours extended. In June, 1782, he arrived at Halifax, the capital of the province, where he preached to what he calls in his journal 'a stupid set of people.' 'Oh, what a town for wickedness is this!' he exclaims. The war had made Halifax a great naval and military station, the chief base for British operations on the American coast. Its population, constantly shifting, was rife with the evil elements that gather in a seaport of this nature. Years earlier a Halifax resident had written :

The business of one half the town is to sell rum, of the other half to drink it. You may from this circumstance judge of our morals, and infer that we are not enthusiasts in religion !

For all this, Black's pleadings and warnings soon began to tell ; the rude profanity of his hearers was subdued to decorum ; and when, after a few days, he left the town, it was with the expression on the part of many of earnest thanks, and of the hope that he would return for more permanent labours. In Halifax William Black acquired an unrivalled influence ; when he settled there some thirty years later, he was accounted its most honoured citizen. His power to subdue opposition and to deal with violent sinners was exhibited when, a few months later, he was taken prisoner by a band of marauders from over the American border. To these he preached with such effect that tears covered the faces of the ruffians, and they released him with words of apology and penitence. His homeward route carried him across to the western side of the peninsula, where stood Annapolis, the old Acadian capital, with its cluster of little towns and villages. An immediate and powerful effect was produced by Black's preaching here, and new Societies were formed. Samuel Chesley, whose name was long honoured in Nova Scotian Methodism, was a first-fruit of his ministry in this quarter.

In July the evangelist found himself at Amherst again ; but a sad spectacle awaited him. In his absence the enemy had sown tares. Another itinerant was at work in Nova Scotia whose relations to William Black resembled, on a



smaller scale, and in a more hostile sense, those of Whitefield to Wesley. *Henry Alline*, the leader of 'the Newlights,' was a Baptist Preacher of passionate and arresting eloquence, born in Rhode Island (U.S.A.) in 1748, who had arrived shortly before this time with a Mission to disturb the sleeping Churches of Nova Scotia. In the nine years of his meteoric course he wrought effects, for good and for evil, such as few have had the power to achieve. Alline was a man of vehement evangelical spirit, but of unbalanced mind and reckless temper. His religion was mysticism uncontrolled by reason, feeling at white heat without ordered thought—the 'enthusiasm' which John Wesley so strongly combated in England. 'His tenets were fragments of different systems without coherence'; he made no attempt to bring his ideas into a system and mutual dependence. He preached a crude Calvinism (derived from his Baptist antecedents) in respect to the sovereignty of grace and unconditional perseverance, and yet magnified the freedom of the will; associating with this medley of doctrine the teachings of William Law in their dangerous eccentricities. While Alline awakened multitudes to a sense of religion, he threw whole Churches into confusion, and set his converts against every kind of discipline, leaving anarchy and antinomianism in his track. Many of those awakened under his influence grew, through other teaching, into sound believers and useful Christian men; many others fell utterly from grace, and became a scandal to religion. For years to come the Newlights in Nova Scotia, and to less degree in New England, filled the Churches with discord and licence, until in a generation the party became extinct. On his return Black found the Methodist Society around his home rent and almost shattered by Alline's preaching; with difficulty he rallied the more sober and stable of its former constituency. The Society membership in Cumberland and the Petitcodiac valley was reduced from 200 to 80 persons.

The young untrained Methodist leader felt himself unequal to the conflict forced upon him. He wrote to Wesley in England giving an account of his work, and asking for guidance in dealing with the Newlight movement, appealing at the same time for helpers from England. Wesley in a very cordial reply promised to send assistance so soon as possible. He advises Black to avoid controversy with Alline and his followers, but

to preach clearly and strongly the doctrines they ignore or deny. In a later communication, referring to a request of Black's that he (Wesley) should write in confutation of the Newlight theology, he says: 'I dare not waste my time in answering such miserable jargon!' He sends his correspondent two volumes of William Law's books:

containing all that Mr. A. would teach if he could. . . . I do not advise you [he adds] to name him in public, although in private you must warn our brethren, but go on your way exactly as if there were no such person in the world.

Black, who was sensible of his deficiencies and of the responsibilities brought on him by his evangelistic success, had written toward the end of 1782 to ask what arrangements might be made for his theological training in England; and Wesley replies in February, 1783: 'If you come over, we shall make room for you at Kingswood.' Wesley had one young man in view who is 'willing to go to any part of Africa or America,' but he wants a companion for him—he 'cannot advise any person to go alone.' Black's place could not be supplied, and he durst not leave his sheep untended. In February, 1784, he married Mary Gay, the daughter of a Presbyterian gentleman of Cumberland county, an educated lady and a thorough helpmate to her husband; she relieved him in his distant journeys of much of his pastoral care. All thought of Kingswood was now laid aside.

Help was coming to the overtaxed young Preacher from a nearer quarter. In 1783 began the influx of British Loyalists from the revolted colonies, which gave a new character to this province. The majority of the new-comers were Episcopalians in religious profession, but a good contingent of Methodists was found in their ranks, including some of the leading members of the New York John Street congregation. Amongst these were the brothers John and James Mann—both of them able Local Preachers, whom Black enlisted before long in the itinerancy. Robert Barry, Charles White, Philip Marchinton, had been pillars of the Society in New York, and lent their influence and means to lay the foundations of Methodism in their adopted country. Barry, the leader of the New York band, was a man of solid character and steady piety. He was a pioneer in the founding of Shelbourne, a town ambitiously

planned by the Loyalists, which occupied a fine situation on the south-eastern coast, but failed to answer the designs of its promoters, involving some of them in financial disaster. Barry surmounted this failure ; for a generation he was the nursing-father to Methodism in his neighbourhood, and a furtherer of every good work. White also suffered from the calamity above mentioned, which appears to have had an unhappy effect upon his character. Black made his way to Shelbourne first in June, 1783, preaching out of doors and sharing Robert Barry's tent (the immigrants were not yet housed). A vigorous Society was at once created, the materials of which were ready made. When, in the spring of the following year, Black visited the infant town again, he found a preaching-room secured and John Mann making effective use of it. A colony of freed negroes had been formed at Burchtown, a short distance from Shelbourne ; to these the Gospel had been preached, and out of them was gathered the greater part of the Society of 200 members in the Shelbourne Circuit. On the round which brought him to Shelbourne Black visited Liverpool—a thriving port lying between the former place and Halifax. His Mission was greatly blessed, and Liverpool became a stronghold of Methodism in the province. It was at this station that two years later (in 1785) John Mann entered upon his itinerant course, encountering at the outset successfully the Newlights, who in various places assailed the Methodist Societies. James Mann was called into the work by Garrettson a year later.

In the autumn of 1783 Black made an excursion to the Isle of St. John (later Prince Edward Island). He lighted upon Benjamin Chappell, a former London Methodist and friend of John Wesley's, who with his wife, in 1775, had been wrecked upon the shore of this island as he voyaged to Quebec. For eight years his solitary light shone in this dark place ; he was happy now to associate himself with the Societies gathered by his visitor upon the mainland. Benjamin Chappell was the pioneer, and lived to be the venerated patriarch of Methodism in Prince Edward Island. He was a skilled machinist, and reached an honourable position in the colony which enabled him to be of great service to his Church. But apart from this valued acquaintance Black found little to encourage him in Charlottetown and the island ; it was some years before the Gospel had free course in this quarter.



The work in Nova Scotia, rapidly growing, had now reached a critical stage. Methodism had been planted up and down the province by a self-appointed preacher, without official status or authorization beyond that implied in Wesley's letters of approval; Nova Scotia as yet appeared in no way upon the *Minutes of Conference*. Black was still, moreover, a very young man, under twenty-four years of age. He was not qualified to administer the Sacraments or to enforce Methodist discipline. The arrival of the Loyalists, including the Methodist party from New York, greatly increased his opportunities, but added to his embarrassments; for amongst the new-comers were men superior in Methodist standing and experience of office, as well as in age. They readily deferred to his leadership—it speaks much for him and for them that they did so; but the position was delicate and precarious; on all hands the necessity for a duly accredited pastorate was felt. William Black was a man full of humility and good sense; the temptation to assume independent authority and to set up a Methodism of his own he did not for a moment entertain.

Early in 1784 Robert Barry wrote to Wesley on the subject of providing oversight for the Methodists of the colony, repeating what Black had previously urged on his own account. Wesley's reply indicated the plans he was revolving for 'helping our brethren abroad; not only those that are settled in the southern provinces (U.S.A.), but those that are in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.' For the last fifteen years he and the Conference had been aiding the former party. He announces later Dr. Coke's Mission to America, and advises Black to consult with him, intimating now that the Methodists of the northern colonies must look to their American neighbours for helpers.

If I am rightly informed [he writes], the Preachers in the United States have already sent you one or two (this, however, was not the case); and they may afford you one or two more, if it please God to give a prosperous voyage to Dr. Coke and his fellow labourers.

At this time, and for some years later, it was evidently assumed in England that the Methodist Episcopal Church would provide for all Methodist work in North America. In the autumn Black took his journey to the States, and met Coke on his arrival there. He attended the famous 'Christmas Conference'



in Baltimore. There the appeal of the young Nova Scotian farmer made a deep impression, particularly upon Dr. Coke himself, whose missionary zeal was heightened by this encounter.

Notwithstanding the paucity of labourers for its own wide-spreading fields, the Baltimore Conference allocated to Nova Scotia two tried itinerants—Freeborn Garrettson and James Oliver Cromwell—who volunteered for this service. Garrettson was one of Asbury's ablest lieutenants. Cromwell was a man of more ordinary type, but thoroughly devoted and useful; his health failed in the rigorous climate of the north, and he was compelled to return home in 1787, finally 'locating' in 1793. He lived many years after this, and is described as 'an humble, sweet-spirited old Minister.' Both were ordained Elders on their appointment to Nova Scotia, and took precedence of Black; not till 1786 does his name, along with that of John Mann, figure upon the Stations in the character of a recognized travelling Preacher.

The two American Preachers landed in Halifax at the end of February, 1785. Their coming not only regularized Black's work, but gave it a powerful impetus. Still comparatively young and full of activity, Garrettson was a mature man of commanding personality and very considerable resources. He shone in debate no less than in exhortation, and proved a tower of strength in the controversy with the Newlights.<sup>1</sup> His talent for organization was also excellent; on all accounts Freeborn Garrettson deserves to be reckoned amongst the most efficient, as well as amongst the holiest, Methodist Preachers of his generation. In 1787 Coke and Asbury proposed to appoint him Superintendent over the Missions in British North America and the West Indies; for some reason which did not transpire this arrangement was not ratified in the States—probably his brethren there judged him indispensable. He

<sup>1</sup> The following dialogue between Freeborn Garrettson and a Newlight backslider is reported: 'Sir,' said the man, 'I like a part of your doctrine well, but a part I don't like.' 'What part don't you like?' said the Preacher. 'You say, sir, that a saint may fall,' was the answer. 'Will you answer me one question?' said G. 'Do you know that you were ever converted?' 'I do,' was the reply. 'Pray tell me then, sir, how matters are at present between God and your own soul?' 'Why,' said the man, 'it's in a winter state.' Pressed closely, he confessed that he was living in sin. 'And yet,' responded Garrettson, 'you do not believe in falling from grace! I believe it is because you *are* fallen. This is what you call a winter state! I call it lying in the arms of the Wicked One; and you may talk as you will about your past experience, but I would not give a straw for your chance of heaven if you die in this state. You are reconciling Christ and Belial.'

left Nova Scotia in April, 1787, with much sorrow over the parting on both sides. He had done a great work for the kingdom of God in a short time, raising Methodism by his two years of ministry to a spiritual influence and a public credit in the province which it permanently retained.

In the winter of 1785-86 Garrettson had charge of the Halifax Circuit, Cromwell of Shelbourne, Mann of Liverpool, and Black of Cumberland county; these were the four earliest centres of Methodism in Nova Scotia. The total membership in the four Circuits was reported at 510, of whom about a half belonged to Shelbourne and the neighbourhood, 50 to Cumberland, 40 each to Halifax and Liverpool, and the residue to the Districts surrounding Windsor and Annapolis. A third or more of this number were negroes. While in Halifax Garrettson secured, with the aid of Philip Marchinton,<sup>1</sup> the erection of a chapel large enough to seat 1,000 people. He wrote to Wesley to beg for contributions to this object from England; in his reply, regretting the impossibility of raising money for such a purpose, Wesley says of the wealthier Methodists of his day: 'It is true they might do much, but it is a sad observation, they that have money have usually the least grace.' In summer the itinerant staff was raised to five by the enlistment of James Mann.

Having secured recruits from the Baltimore Conference, William Black lingered for some months in the south, visiting former friends and making new ones. He spent several weeks in Boston (Mass.), where up to this date Methodism was unknown, preaching in the various churches of the city, and with such power that 3,000 persons (it is said) gathered to hear his farewell address. A revival of religion began from this Mission the results of which were manifest thirty-seven years after, when Black revisited Boston. Returning to Nova Scotia late in spring, he moved his family from Amherst to Halifax, which henceforth became his head quarters. About this time he made acquaintance with Alexander Anderson, a Scotchman of education who had been converted to God under the ministry of John Newton in London. Through Black's teaching, and the Methodist fellowship of Halifax to which he was introduced, Anderson came to know 'the peace and joy of faith.' Ready

<sup>1</sup> This gentleman, who had a chequered career, and in his early days rendered great service to Methodism, subsequently quarrelled with the Society at Halifax, and found legal means to take this chapel from them. He preached in it for some time himself. The Methodists erected another in its place.

for every good word and work, he served as Local Preacher and class-leader ; for more than forty years he was ' both as to strength and ornament a pillar ' in Halifax Methodism. Holding an important post in the dockyard, Anderson's integrity and spotless character tended greatly to the elevation of public morals.

A ' Conference '—we should call it a District Synod—was summoned to meet Dr. Coke at Halifax on October 10, 1786—the first for Nova Scotia. The doctor failed to arrive—his ship was driven to Antigua instead of Halifax—and Coke never stepped on the shores of British North America, though often promising and intending to come. The disappointment was great ; the necessary business was transacted nevertheless. District affairs were put upon a satisfactory footing, and Connexional unity was secured. At this gathering William Grandin, a Loyalist from the States like the two Manns, received his first Circuit appointment—the sixth itinerant on the Nova Scotia Stations. Grandin laboured most diligently and serviceably for thirteen years, until the hardships of his work broke down a constitution never of the strongest.

About this time, under the influence of Garrettson and Black, John Allison, of Cornwallis, was won for Methodism. He was a thoughtful religious man of Irish-Presbyterian extraction, who came across a volume of John Fletcher's controversial writings, and rose from its perusal converted to Arminian views upon the doctrines of grace. His new convictions, and the happier experience of religion consequent upon them, drew him to the Methodist Communion, of which he was for the rest of his life an exemplary and liberal supporter. John Allison, Alexander Anderson, Robert Barry, and Colonel Samuel Bayard may be counted the lay fathers of Nova Scotian Methodism. Mrs. Jonathan Crane, of Horton, the sister of the first-named, had been brought into the light of the Gospel somewhat earlier ; she brought her husband, an influential magistrate and public man, and many of her circle with her. The family of Allisons prospered in the colony ; its name is commemorated by the Mount Allison College at Sackville (N.B.), the chief Methodist educational foundation of the lower provinces.

The withdrawal of Garrettson and Cromwell left the little Nova Scotian Church again to its local resources, and without an ordained Minister. Black and his comrades struggled on as



best they might. At the American Conference of the next year (1788) two volunteers came forward to fill the vacated places in Nova Scotia. One of these—Woolman Hickson, a young Preacher of high promise—when on the point of departure sickened and died at New York; the second, William Jessop, a valuable recruit, served only as a temporary supply (later he returned to the province). The weakened band of preachers held Synod at Halifax in October of this year, to frame the best makeshift arrangements they could. They were cheered by a great revival which had broken out at Liverpool during the previous year. The correspondence between William Black and John Wesley continued. The former entertains Wesley with an account of the sects imported into Halifax from the United States, including Sandemanians and Swedenborgians and ‘a great swarm of infidels!’ Wesley confides in his correspondent by telling him of the dissensions in Newfoundland and McGeary’s troubles there, with the hope that Black may help to make peace.

Grieved at the failure of Coke and Asbury to provide for Nova Scotia, Wesley sent out a Superintendent, an English Preacher ordained for this service, who arrived early in 1789. This was James Wray, an itinerant of eight years’ standing and high in Wesley’s esteem (put by him on the list of the ‘Legal Hundred’ while yet on probation). Wray was a worthy and diligent man, and was cordially received. However, he showed himself superior in nothing but his official rank to the men upon the ground; and, like Rankin in the southern colonies, he failed through want of tact and an inconsiderate desire to conform colonial practice to English rule. Friction at once arose; and Wesley, informed from one side of the dispute, writes in February, 1789, to James Mann: ‘They make objections to James Wray that he is an Englishman! Oh, American gratitude! Lord, I appeal to Thee!’ Irregularities had inevitably sprung up in Nova Scotian Methodism, and there was need for tightening the reins of discipline; but such work requires a gentle as well as a firm hand, and this was wanting in the raw English Superintendent. Wray wrote a sharp, severe letter to Black, to which the latter returned a soft answer. ‘A friendly consultation resulted in the restoration of harmony, but did not prevent Wray from requesting Dr. Coke (as General Superintendent)



to relieve him of his responsibility by the appointment of another in his stead.' A chief cause of dispute lay in the imperfect itinerancy operating in Nova Scotia. The Preachers were constantly on the move, and visited every part of the province; but they found it convenient to make their rounds from fixed centres, and did not exchange Circuits freely and frequently as in England and the States, Black, for example, remaining year after year with a settled home in Halifax, and John Mann in Liverpool (afterwards in Newport). This deviation from the Methodist plan was ultimately corrected; Wray's attempt to rectify it out of hand was ill-judged and unsuccessful.

There was another cause of dissension in the Nova Scotia Societies which made Wray's course difficult. The Loyalists were mostly Church of England men, and politically intensely Conservative; the older colonists were mainly of the opposite way of thinking; many of them, in fact, sympathized with the Revolutionaries of the south. The Anglican clergy claimed, and had to some extent secured, State patronage and assistance, greatly to the provocation of Nonconformist feeling. These party divisions disturbed Methodism here, as subsequently on a much larger scale in Upper Canada. Wesley was aware of the trouble, and threw his influence on the side of the Anglican sympathizers. In 1785 he had written to Barry:

I advise you, by all lawful means, to keep favour with your clergymen. If they can do little good, they can do much harm to the work of God. . . . As much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men, but with the clergy in particular.

To follow this advice became, however, increasingly difficult as with their numbers the pretensions of the clergy grew after the Loyalist accession, and their intolerance in some conspicuous instances became pronounced. Wray held to the English Wesleyan policy in Church questions. Black, as was inevitable in a colonial, inclined in his gentle and prudent way to the liberal side. The American Preachers were still more outspoken; with some important exceptions the Methodists scouted the idea of Anglican ascendancy. In this dispute a crucial point, carried at Halifax in 1792, was the holding of Methodist services during Church hours.

In May, 1789, William Black and the brothers Mann were summoned to Philadelphia for the Methodist Episcopal Conference, where the three of them received ordination to Elder-ship at the hands of Coke and Asbury. The seal thus set on their home-born ministry gratified the Nova Scotian Methodists. Alexander Anderson writes, referring to this event :

The Preachers' visit to the States has been blessed to them and to us. There is a sensible revival among us.

The fire burning in American Methodism warmed the hearts of the lonely Preachers from Nova Scotia ; they resumed their work with fresh vigour and a heightened sense of their commission. On returning from Philadelphia Black took a preaching-tour through the country, administering the Lord's Supper everywhere to the little Methodist Churches, hitherto in most cases cut off from this Sacrament. Communicants flocked to the Lord's table.

The sacramental service, and the love-feast which usually followed it,<sup>1</sup> were seasons of holy delight

to assemblies gathered from far and near ' to share the rare privilege.' Accepting Wray's resignation, Dr. Coke now designated Black ' Presiding Elder ' in his place, a change apparently approved by Wesley, for the Stations are printed accordingly in the ensuing *Minutes of Conference*. James Wray served in Nova Scotia for a couple of years longer, and was then transferred to St. Vincent, in the West Indies, where he finished his course shortly afterwards in the triumph of faith. Robert Barry describes him as ' a very faithful labourer in the Lord's vineyard.' In 1790 the British *Minutes* recognize three Circuits—Halifax, Liverpool, and Cumberland—in this District, with five travelling Preachers (William Grandin was not yet on the strict itinerant footing). The Church membership of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland is lumped together as 800, of whom 200 were ' blacks.' The latter were transported to the newly founded colony of Sierra Leone in 1791, where, with their own Local Preachers and class-leaders, they maintained their Methodist profession.

The use of the title ' Presiding Elder ' shows that Nova

<sup>1</sup> This Methodist combination was a revival of the practice of the Primitive Church.

Scotia was regarded as under the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church ; its Methodist leaders looked thither for direction and support. At the same time Nova Scotia was never formally incorporated with this Church, although for some years William Black desired and worked for this consummation, which he knew to have been in John Wesley's mind. The American Bishops made no visits to the District and took no disciplinary action within its borders ; Ministers from Nova Scotia attended the American Conference from time to time by invitation, not as official representatives. On the other hand, Black was appointed 'Presiding Elder' in 1793 by Dr. Coke, and was responsible to him. Coke was careful to make this appointment in his capacity as 'Bishop' of the M.E. Church ; ordinations and designations for Nova Scotia, and all official phraseology, ran in the M.E. style ; and the financial arrangements of the District were framed on American lines. It seems to have been only the accident of Dr. Coke's repeated inability to visit this colony which prevented its formal annexation.<sup>1</sup> For the next ten years or so this bit of Methodism stood in an undefined and quasi-independent relation to the Churches in Britain and in America. No case of discipline arose that needed to be carried outside the province, which was practically self-governing. The Nova Scotian Synod ('Conference,' it was styled) of 1795 published its *Minutes* in a four-paged pamphlet, which had something of the character of a separate 'Book of Discipline.'

The New York District, where Garrettson was Presiding Elder, was the nearest section of the American Church. Such an ally was bound to send reinforcement. Thomas Whitehead came across the border from the south in 1790 ; after assisting for a short time in this Mission, he entered the work in Canada, where he stood as a tower of strength to Methodism almost to the middle of the next century. The New York Conference of 1791 took the affairs of Nova Scotia into full consideration, and was able to find *six* new Preachers for the colony, an addition raising the staff to the number of nine. James Wray had departed for the West Indies ; James Mann for the present was stationed in New York. Amongst the

<sup>1</sup> We shall find the same question arising later in the case of Canada, where it took an acute and entangled form.

additional Circuits thus provided for figure Annapolis and River St. John; the District 'lengthened its cords' while it 'strengthened its stakes.' The Circuit-title 'St. John' signifies the occupation of *New Brunswick*, the province carved out some years before for occupation by the United Empire Loyalists. William Black at the outset had missioned the eastern border of this vast area adjoining his home county of Cumberland, but its centre was at the thriving town and harbour of St. John (to be distinguished from St. John's in Newfoundland) and in the fertile country bordering the river of that name. Midway in the St. John valley stood Fredericton, the provincial capital.

Up to this time the pioneer Preachers had been able to pay but rare flying visits across the Bay of Fundy to St. John. In the absence of Methodism the Newlight teachings of Aline had made a conquest of this region.

If this river [wrote Black some years later] had been supplied with suitable Preachers, almost the entire country for 200 miles together would have embraced the Methodist doctrine. That time is now lost; they are deeply initiated into the mysteries of Antinomianism, which in some instances has produced extravagances hardly to be surpassed in the whole history of enthusiasm.

Some of the Newlights of New Brunswick settled down in the end into sober Baptists; but many 'made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience.' At the same time the loyalty to the Church of England which prevailed in the majority of settled immigrants was bound up with their love to the old country. At least a dozen clergymen were found amongst the fugitives from the United States. From the beginning Anglicanism planted itself firmly in New Brunswick, while Nova Scotia was predominantly Nonconformist. Hence Methodism was exposed here in the earlier days to much intolerance, which seldom, however, took the disgraceful form witnessed in Newfoundland.

Abraham John Bishop was the first Methodist Preacher greatly successful in New Brunswick. He was a Jerseyman, of education and good social standing—master of both French and English—who in early youth had devoted his property to the furtherance of Methodist work. Already a Local Preacher, and conscious of a larger call, hearing that an appeal



had been made from Nova Scotia to the British Conference to supply a Preacher for the French people of that colony, he wrote to offer his services. They were accepted, and he arrived at Halifax in August, 1791. The way was not open for immediate service amongst the *habitans*; and Bishop was invited meanwhile to St. John (N.B.), where a number of Methodist exiles from the United States had recently settled. The leader of this company was Stephen Humbert, a native of New Jersey (U.S.A.), who stood forth for many years as a prominent citizen of the colony and a devoted and faithful Methodist layman. Bishop was a man full of the Spirit of Christ—ardent and yet sober, solemn and tender in appeal; he saw many souls awakened. His labour was unsparing, and soon extended beyond St. John to the other parts of the District. Black's visit in November set him free to answer a call from the important town of Sheffield, where his preaching had an equally powerful effect; later he passed up the river to Fredericton, and to Nashwaak valley, farther north, where a band of discharged Highland soldiers were found cut off from religious ordinances, who gave the Preacher an eager welcome. Everywhere he carried the flame of revival with him. Bishop's companion on this campaign was a well-known and much-respected Scotchman of the name of Duncan Blair. In April, 1792, Bishop reports a Society of 80 persons in St. John, and 'a church already purchased, furnished with pulpit and galleries,' where 'the people continue to attend diligently. The experience of the young converts,' he adds, 'is truly wonderful.'

Hearing of Abraham Bishop's extraordinary gifts and the blessing that attended his work, Dr. Coke coveted him for the West Indian field. Just at that time he was in search of a French Preacher for the island of Grenada, in the West Indies, and sought to enlist him. Bishop thought it his duty to comply, although his health was strained through excessive toil, and the physician he consulted told him plainly that the West Indian climate would probably be fatal. Robert Barry wrote to Coke earnestly deprecating the risk to 'a life so valuable' incurred by the removal. These warnings were in vain. Bishop landed in Grenada in January, 1793, and died of yellow fever on June 16 of the same year, 'after having crowded into a few months labours productive of rare

spiritual results.' The *Minutes* of 1794, in recording his death, say :

He was one of the holiest young men on earth. He lived constantly 'within the veil,' and his soul uninterruptedly burned for the salvation of souls.

A life of rare possibilities was thrown away in disregard of the danger-signals of physical disaster.

At another point of New Brunswick Methodist work began simultaneously with that of Abraham Bishop, and quite independently. Duncan McColl, a Highlander from Argyleshire, the son of a praying mother, had served in the British forces during the American War, and experienced some remarkable providential escapes from death which led him to religious conviction. Through prayer and the study of Scripture he found Christ, without other human aid. He had already devoted his life to God, when, while still in the Army, a voyage, on which he was shipwrecked and detained at Bermuda, brought him into intercourse with the Methodists, from whom he learnt the way of the Lord more perfectly. At Bermuda in February, 1784, he first began to exercise his gifts publicly amongst his fellow exiles. Subsequently he settled in business at St. Stephen, a new town situated on the River St. Croix, which parts New Brunswick from the State of Maine. This south-western district of the province, now rapidly opening up for settlement, was hitherto left in spiritual destitution.

I found [wrote McColl later] a mixed multitude from Great Britain, Ireland, and the United States—partly disbanded soldiers and refugees—scattered through the wilderness without either the form or power of godliness. There was no place of public worship within sixty miles of them, save one of the Church of England in St. Andrew's, sixteen miles away.

McColl opened his house for prayer and the reading of Scripture. On the first Sabbath six neighbours joined him, on the second sixty. The interest in these gatherings continually grew. Religious concern was awakened in many minds, and McColl's counsel was asked; he had the joy of leading some into the light of salvation. The magistrates, hearing strange reports of the meetings, showed alarm; but McColl fearlessly asserted the rights of religious liberty, and no interference was

attempted. At this stage the conviction of his duty to preach seized McColl's mind.

I fasted and prayed [he writes], and laid our case before the Lord ; and the prophecies of Jer. xx. 8-11 came with such force to my soul as to remove all scruple, and I was sure that the Lord had called me to the ministry. I was deeply conscious of my want of talents for such office, but God added spiritual help.

Here is another example, resembling Black's, of ' waters breaking out in the wilderness and streams in the desert.' No theory of the Christian ministry can be sound which does not allow for instances of this nature—which does not recognize the liberty of the Lord of the harvest to ' thrust forth labourers into His harvest ' by His sole initiative and equipment, though no pre-engaged labourers or overseers are on the spot to invite and authenticate them. ' Rubrics or no rubrics,' as John Wesley once said, ' God's work must go on.'

Having taken the decisive step, McColl formed a Society from those around him who ' had believed through grace,' following the Methodist plan as nearly as he knew how. The multiplication of his spiritual duties compelled him to give up secular affairs, and he devoted his whole time to study and the ministry of the Word. Conversions took place quietly every two or three months ; McColl's proceedings were characterized by Scotch sobriety and deliberation. Black, when he first visited the Societies of this region, was impressed with the spirituality of McColl's work. ' I kept on the move,' he says, ' around the country ; and, blessed by the Lord, I met with encouragement wherever I went ; for Satan's kingdom suffered much loss.'

While thus occupied, and at much expense, on the Lord's service, leaving his business to the care of others, ' My property,' he reports, ' was blessed abundantly, almost to a miracle !' On this point ' I felt discouraged once ; but these words came into my mind and relieved me : " When I sent you forth without purse lacked ye anything ? " I cried, " Nothing, Lord ; no, no ! "' In 1790 McColl and his friends were obliged by the largeness of their gatherings to build a church at St. Stephen, which in less than four years was cleared of debt. In the autumn of 1791 he came to seek William Black at Halifax, at the very time when Bishop resorted thither to give account of



his work at St. John. Black was absent on his excursion to Newfoundland, and the two New Brunswick pioneers had to return without seeing him ; but he visited the province a few months later, and gladly took the Societies they had raised under his charge. Not until 1793 was Duncan McColl, whom we find stationed at that date as the third with James Mann (who had now returned from New York) and William Grandin on the ' New Brunswick Circuit,' recognized as a regular itinerant preacher ; but from 1891 onwards he shepherded, under Black's superintendence, the Societies established along the Maine frontier. Ordained by Bishop Asbury in 1795, McColl exercised a long and fruitful ministry until 1826, his death following in 1830. His position in the itinerancy was anomalous, for he kept a settled home at St. Stephen, as Black did at Halifax and John Mann at Newport, whilst ' travelling ' western New Brunswick in conjunction with his brethren of the District, and making occasional excursions into other parts of the two provinces. Practically he had a fixed pastorate, holding in his own region a sort of *imperium in imperio*, which in the case of a man less loyal or judicious would have endangered Methodist unity. The results of this exceptional policy appear to have been wholly good ; McColl's unique local influence proved a permanent blessing to the county.

None of the six young Preachers secured for Nova Scotia in 1791 stayed permanently in the province. One of them, a man of marked ability, broke down in character, and by his disgrace injured the Methodist cause at Annapolis, where he had acquired no little popularity. James Boyd, William Earley (a vigorous pioneer), Benjamin Fisher, William Jessop, and John Regan within a few years returned southwards—the two last-named to meet an early death. Regan was a thoughtful and winning Preacher of Irish extraction, greatly admired ; Jessop fell a sacrifice to his intense labours in the colony. Three others were enlisted from the same quarter in 1792, one of them soon returned the way that he came ; another never rose above the order of Deacon ; the third, Daniel Fidler, persevered until 1798. An admirable missionary pastor, exhibiting a ' singularly happy and cheerful piety,' Nova Scotia would gladly have kept Fidler had he not grown home-sick ; he fulfilled a long course in the Methodist ministry, attaining to patriarchal age and honour. His six years of manful service merit, however, for



Daniel Fidler a place amongst the fathers of Methodism in the maritime provinces.

By the end of the century it was evident that for the British colonies the help of American Methodism was vain. The men who came across the border felt themselves aliens—they could not take the oath of allegiance to the British crown, and at times were liable to suspicion on political grounds. Bishop Asbury complained that Nova Scotia 'spoiled' his young men—certainly he appeared to grudge sending them; in truth the work on his hands within the borders of the Republic left him none to spare. The experiment of union with the Methodism of the United States failed chiefly for this reason. Nova Scotia was compelled to turn her eyes elsewhere, and in 1799 Black crossed the Atlantic to seek aid from the mother country. By this date eleven Circuits had been formed in the two provinces, reporting 1,100 Church members, and but seven Preachers to man them.

Other extensions of the Mission had taken place since, in 1791, Bishop broke ground along the St. John River and McColl on the Maine border. Two of the new departures were initiated by William Grandin. *Wallace* (then known by its Indian name of Ramsheg) stands on the northern shore of Nova Scotia, looking across Northumberland Strait to Prince Edward Island. Grandin, then travelling the Cumberland Circuit, made his way during the winter of 1791-92 through forty miles of forest to evangelize the Loyalist settlers of Wallace, who had seen the face of but one Minister of Christ since coming to this lonely spot seven years earlier. The Preacher's words were as fire in dry stubble; a revival began which proved 'both powerful and permanent,' and changed the character of the District. Grandin found a priceless ally in Stephen Cansfield, who till the close of a long and blameless life was class-leader, and served as the first Steward of the Wallace Circuit.

In the spring of 1792 Grandin, who was now at St. John, relieved for a while by McColl of his charge there, fulfilled a long-cherished desire of visiting Prince Edward Island. Black's early attempt on the island had not been followed up; Benjamin Chappell remained to bear his witness alone. Grandin's Mission, however, took lasting effect. At Tryon, where he chiefly laboured, a signal awakening came about, and a Society was established with Nathaniel Wright and his

wife for its foster parents which gave to Methodism a sure footing on the island. When in the autumn of 1794 Black came this way, he found beside the Tryon Church a Society at Charlottetown, the capital. Hither Joshua Newton had recently come as Collector of Customs for the island; he joined hands with Benjamin Chappell and his little company, giving a new impulse to their meetings. Newton, who had been converted under Black's preaching in Halifax, was a man of solid judgement and commanding influence, a life-long class-leader and an invaluable counsellor to his Church, and able to fill the pulpit on occasion. Joshua Newton took a chief part in Methodist foundations in Prince Edward Island; removing to Liverpool a few years later, he remained for a generation the rallying centre of its work in that part of Nova Scotia. Francis Newton, Joshua's younger brother, after studying for Anglican orders, entered the itinerant service, but early met his death through shipwreck. Referring to this pair, Robert Barry wrote: 'Two of one family I never saw equal to them for piety and wisdom.' A third brother, Gilbert Stewart Newton, R.A., became a distinguished British artist. On returning to New Brunswick, Grandin, whose ministry at this period was wonderfully blessed, explored in company with Duncan Blair the Nashwaak valley north of Fredericton, where Bishop had led the way. Here he planted Methodism among the Highland settlers.

Since his appointment in 1790 to the Presiding Eldership, William Black had been incessantly active in the care of his extensive diocese. In 1791 he paid the memorable visit to Newfoundland related in the last chapter. Next year Dr. Coke summoned him to attend the American Conference at Baltimore, where he proposed his taking charge of the St. Kitts District of the West Indies.<sup>1</sup> Black was actually appointed to the office (John Harper, from the West Indies, being designated to replace him in Nova Scotia), and in December sailed along with Coke to reconnoitre the new field. He returned to wind up his affairs at home, and attended the Nova Scotia Synod held at Windsor early in 1793. At this meeting a determined opposition was raised to Black's removal—his temporary absence had convinced his brethren that he

<sup>1</sup> Coke was always ready to 'rob other Churches' for the sake of the West Indies; it was at this very time that he removed Abraham Bishop from New Brunswick with such unfortunate results.

was indispensable. Dr. Coke, who was then on tour in the States, was daily expected at the Windsor Synod, but never came ; its representations, however, induced him to lay aside the plan on which his heart had been set. On reaching Halifax from the West Indies in April, Black found the new building (replacing ' Marchinton's Chapel ') ' handsomely finished.' Two months later the first sermon was preached in the large church built at Liverpool. These erections, effected entirely by local means, indicated the strong vantage-ground which Methodism, after twelve years' labour, had won in the chief towns of the province.

In 1793 the war with France broke out ; this long struggle, affecting British dominion throughout the world, gave increased importance to Halifax and the neighbouring coast ; at the same time the fitting out of privateer warships, which soon became the most lucrative business of Nova Scotian ports, demoralized the seafaring population, and made religious work peculiarly difficult. The times were most unsettled, and a strong ministry was needed to cope with the situation ; yet instead of being able to increase his staff, Black had the mortification of seeing it reduced by the return of the American volunteers, with no means of filling up the ranks. The Church membership reported from the District at this date was close upon a thousand.

The Synod of 1794, which consisted of eight Ministers, found the membership in Society raised to 1,100. It rejoiced over the accession to its ranks of Theodore Seth Harding, a young Preacher of Congregational family, brought to the knowledge of Christ by James Mann's guidance, who gave uncommon promise of usefulness. He was found, however, in a little time to be too much imbued with the Calvinism of his early training for Methodist service, and he passed over to the Baptist ministry, in which for sixty years he was a shining light. In 1796 the itinerants on the Stations were no more than six—a number pitifully inadequate to the work to be done, no greater than that employed twelve years earlier, when the population was perhaps half its present size. Black brought back from his visit to the American Conference of 1796 nothing but words of sympathy. Instead of making progress, the scattered and half-shepherded little Churches would quickly decline unless help from the mother country was available. Hence Black's voyage to England in 1799, which proved a



turning-point in the history of Methodism in British North America.

Evidently some appeal had previously been made by letter to the British Conference, for *Nova Scotia* is included in the missionary fields to which the Chairman of the English Districts are instructed by the Conference of 1798 to direct the attention of young Preachers, with a view to enlisting volunteers for work abroad. His visit to England was an occasion of deep interest to William Black. His heart yearned for the motherland he had left in youth ; he cherished the hope of spending his later years among the British Methodists, when he should be able to hand over his charge in the colonies to American care. Although this prospect had now vanished, the purpose to return to England was strong in his breast ; he expressed his wish to Dr. Coke, desiring to effect an exchange of work with some Preacher in a home Circuit, and was met with a remonstrance half-solemn and half-playful, in a letter dated May, 1801 :

What will you do on a Circuit in England ? They don't want you ! Give up your great sphere of action, in which God has, by a series of miracles, placed you, if you dare ! Mind, you will repent of it but once, if you retain the life of God.

Black stayed many months in England ; his presence at Conference, and his visits and preaching up and down the country, brought him a multitude of friends. Amongst these was a young Preacher then beginning his probation, named *Jabez Bunting*, who retained a warm admiration for the colonial pioneer, and continued in correspondence with him till the close of his life. Dr. Coke actively interested himself in securing for Black the recruits he sought. From this time the Methodism of the maritime provinces gravitated wholly toward the British Connexion.

Black arrived from England in October, 1800, bringing four young Preachers with him ; their names were James Lowry, Thomas Olivant, William Bennett, and Joshua Marsden. The first-named had travelled one year in the Irish ministry ; the other three were novices. Bennett and Marsden—both of them hailing from the Manchester Circuit, and the former amongst Jabez Bunting's companions—proved a great acquisition ; they were men of the true missionary stamp—steady,



laborious, uncomplaining, ready for every hardship, men also who could stand alone, who knew both how to obey and how to win obedience from others. Alike they fulfilled a long course in colonial Methodism, and were builders of the Church of God. On the voyage Black and his helpers were commandeered by the captain for military aid. The country was at war with France, and, the ship having no convoy, had to see to its own protection. It was armed, but had only a working crew, and the passengers were trained to act as marines or gunners. The vessel was actually chased by a privateer for some distance, and attack appeared to be imminent, but the enemy sheered off. Such were the liabilities of missionary travellers a hundred years ago. Lowry, who lost his health, departed for the United States in 1802; the other three, along with John Cooper—one of the older Nova Scotian itinerants—visited the New York Conference at the same date to receive ordination from Bishops Asbury and Whatcoat. The Preachers of the colony, however, ceased from about this time to use American titles, and conformed to British official phraseology.

The Nova Scotian ministry was strengthened a little later by another recruit of mark, who came into its ranks in a different fashion from those just referred to. This was Stephen Bamford, whose name became a household word in the colonies. A native of Nottinghamshire, born in 1770, he had enlisted at about the age of twenty in a British regiment, which was dispatched to Halifax in 1802. He had seen a good deal of fighting. Bamford, who was conspicuous for his gallant bearing as a soldier, had been led to Christ some years earlier while in hospital suffering from wounds; since that time he had witnessed for Christ with a courage and good temper which inspired respect throughout the regiment. A considerable number of his comrades, including several officers, were led to the Saviour by his means. Samuel Bradburn, then stationed at Plymouth, put Bamford's name upon the Local Preachers' Plan, and gave him credentials on his removal to Halifax. He was received with open arms by the Methodists there, and preached for them as freely as his military duties allowed, winning, like Captain Webb thirty-six years before in New York, a singular popularity, which he used to the best purpose. Before his regiment left Halifax, the Methodists

'bought out' the soldier-Preacher and enlisted him, in 1806, for the Church Militant. He was ordained at the New England Conference of 1809—the last Nova Scotian to cross the border for this purpose. But his whole active ministry of twenty-eight years was devoted to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and it was richly productive. Bamford's preaching was manly, pungent, full of tenderness and quaint simple humour. The downrightness of his character and the thoroughness of his labour corresponded with his speech. For several years he presided as Chairman of the Nova Scotia District.

About the time of Bamford's coming Methodist work in the maritime provinces began to revive. The new English Preachers *took* with the people, and though the itinerant staff remained very inadequate, pastoral care and discipline were distinctly improved. Bennett in the St. John Circuit (N.B.), and Marsden in the Liverpool Circuit (N.S.), were particularly useful. Amongst those converted under Bennett's ministry at this period was the mother of the Pickard family, famous in the next generation of New Brunswick Methodists.<sup>1</sup> The Society at Annapolis, which had undergone several vicissitudes, received important accessions, particularly in the person of Colonel Samuel Vetch Bayard, the son of a wealthy Loyalist of French descent, who had fought in the Revolutionary War, and the former commander of the Nova Scotia military. Colonel Bayard, who had been a leader in 'gay' colonial society, came to the vital knowledge of religion through hearing Edward Manning, a well-known Baptist Minister of the peninsula. The reading of Wesley's sermons, put into his hands by a friend, showed him the way of salvation; and Fletcher's *Checks* convinced him of the errors of Calvinism. Learning of William Black's coming to Annapolis, Bayard invited him to his house and had him made a sensation in the colony, especially in its fashionable circles. The Colonel wrote to the Duke of Kent (Queen Victoria's father), amongst others of his old acquaintance, relating to him the change in his opinions and life; he received an answer which did credit to the heart of the royal Duke, and was in keeping with the serious sentiments which the latter evidently cherished toward the end of his life. The transformation in Colonel

<sup>1</sup> One of her sons was Humphrey Pickard, D.D., for many years head of the Sackville College.

Bayard was as complete as it had been sudden. He devoted himself to public duties, and became a diligent and exemplary magistrate. At the same time he was a class-leader and exhorter in his Church, and showed himself foremost in every good work. Those who knew his private life described him as, for holiness, 'the John Fletcher of Nova Scotia.' Colonel Bayard 'was one of those rare saints upon whom the mind loves to dwell.'

Other laymen of great usefulness were raised up in the early times of Methodism in the maritime provinces. John Black, William's elder brother, remained in the paternal home at Amherst. He was a Local Preacher of power and a man of strong and firm character. When, as repeatedly happened, the Cumberland Circuit was left unsupplied, or the Preacher in charge was absent, John Black would take up the neglected work and keep the Circuit going. Again and again revival attended his preaching. Prince Edward Island had been neglected since Grandin's successful 'raid' of 1794; Black could find no Preacher for this promising Circuit. The little struggling Societies nevertheless lived on, encouraged by the sympathy of Theophilus Desbrisay, the evangelical rector of Charlottetown. In 1801 they received a great quickening through the coming of Thomas Dawson, an Irish farmer and Local Preacher, who had in his youth fought under Lord Cornwallis in the American War, and now settled with his family in this colony. Distressed at the religious destitution of the people, he laid himself out to supply the lack of service. Every part of this extensive island was reached in his preaching tours. Often he swam the streams—at this early period roads and bridges alike were wanting—'no obstacle would hinder him from what he considered to be his duty.' Though Dawson was a man of powerful constitution and in the prime of life, these severe labours, added to the cares of his family and farm, quickly broke down his strength, and he died in March, 1805, departing 'happy in God, full of faith and love and joy.' His ministry was long remembered with gratitude.

The story of this heroic pioneer, as told by Black in the *Methodist Magazine*, stirred the soul of Joseph Avard, of Guernsey, who forthwith organized a party of emigrants to form a Methodist colony in Prince Edward Island. Avard was a Local Preacher, and took up the mantle of the fallen



Dawson. Finding himself unequal to the task (the whole island was now crying for Methodist preaching), Avard, who was acquainted with Dr. Coke and Adam Clarke, wrote for help to England; James Bulpitt, who had served for some years in Newfoundland, was sent to take charge of the Island Mission, which from the year 1807 has a regular place on the Stations of the Nova Scotia District. Joseph Avard long remained to nurse Methodism in the colony; he gave a son to the ministry, whom we shall meet later.

Dr. Coke, who would not have Black remove to England, renewed his attempts to draw him away towards the West Indies. They met at Baltimore Conference of 1804; and Black gave his consent to take charge of the Mission in Bermuda, then in sore straits. This appointment was gazetted in the Stations for that year; but it never took effect, although Black made a preparatory trip to the islands, and actually engaged a passage for himself and family in a vessel bound thither from New York. His sailing was prevented by a group of Bermudians concerned in the recent persecution, who threatened to leave the ship if the Methodist Preacher stepped on board! The captain yielded to them; and, as no other conveyance was available, Black returned home. The attempt to draw Black to Bermuda was renewed two years later; but this time the Nova Scotia District promptly remonstrated, and Coke desisted. One good result followed from this last design. A couple of new Missionaries were sent from England in prospect of Black's removal. William Sutcliffe, one of these two, who arrived early in 1805, proved a treasure to Nova Scotia; he was a winner of souls, and greatly furthered the revival that had begun with the coming of Bennett, Marsden, and Dawson. Having failed to secure Black for the Bermudas, at the end of 1807 Dr. Coke laid hands on Joshua Marsden, then at the height of his successful work in St. John (N.B.), where he built a new church replacing that purchased by Bishop. Marsden never saw British North America again. He was a great blessing where he went, but his removal appeared very untimely for this slenderly occupied field. In the course of the next six years, beside Bulpitt's appointment to Prince Edward Island, the missionary staff gained important accessions in the person of the Irishman, James Knowlan, transferred (through sickness) from the West



Indies in lieu of Marsden ; in James Priestley, who volunteered for Nova Scotia at the English Conference of 1810 ; and, above all, in the stalwart Devonian, William Crosscombe, who came to the colony in the year following. Knowlan and Crosscombe bore the burden of a long day of arduous service, partly in the maritime provinces and partly in Lower Canada. Priestley was a man of striking talent, and speedily rose to a foremost place in the provincial ministry ; he is described by one of his brethren as the speaker ' most worthy of imitation ' of all he had ever listened to ; but at the height of his popularity he fell through strong drink. The discipline exercised upon him excited amongst his friends a storm of resentment, in which, for the time (in 1824), the Methodism of St. John (N.B.) was almost swept away.

In the winter of 1806-07 Nova Scotia was visited by a general revival of religion, commencing at an isolated spot in the Liverpool Circuit, thirty miles distant from the town. Here a party of settlers, headed by a lapsed convert of Henry Alline's, tired of their Sunday sports, resolved, more in jest than in seriousness, to hold a prayer-meeting amongst themselves. They met at the appointed place, when the sight of the Bible laid on a white cloth upon the table in their midst strangely touched the company ; the power of God came down upon them, and they began to pray in good earnest, with cries and tears of penitence. The work of conviction spread till it affected the whole village. Several who had received blessing carried the news to Liverpool, and William Sutcliffe, who was stationed there, went down at once to Pleasant River to see and help. He returned after a week, bringing a new fire with him. Liverpool and the whole Circuit was set on a blaze. Secular business was laid aside ; streets and houses were filled with seekers after God's salvation ; the Congregational Church shared with the Methodist in the happy task of guiding men to Christ and gathering in the converts. Black reports that scarcely a family in Liverpool was untouched by this awakening ; ' some of the most profligate and hardened have been brought to repentance. . . . It is almost impossible to gainsay or resist.' Almost simultaneously in Halifax, Annapolis, Barrington, Wallace, St. John (N.B.), the work of the Spirit appeared in like fashion. This winter was the greatest season Methodism in the lower

provinces had known. A couple of Scotch visitors, offended by the scenes of excitement they witnessed, sent an evil report of the revival, which reached the English *Evangelical Magazine and Christian Observer*, provoking in those organs contemptuous observations on Methodism, to which Joseph Benson, in the *Methodist Magazine*, made a powerful reply, supported by communications from William Black. Solid fruit remained for the religious life of the colonies from this extraordinary movement.

A few years after this Black took part in another and different kind of controversy. The attempts of the Episcopalians to secure exclusive privileges and State grants culminated, both in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, about the years 1809-11; and the Methodists sided with other Nonconformists in resistance. These schemes, though assisted by the English Governor, were defeated in the House of Assembly of Nova Scotia. In this province the Anglicans were far out-numbered; in the other colony they had much more public influence, and the struggle was protracted. Black, who fortunately was stationed then at St. John, took a leading part in opposition; his perfect temper and powers of persuasion, and the general respect his character inspired, did much for the cause of religious equality at this crisis.

But William Black's active career was drawing to an end. In the list of Stations for 1811 his name is attached to the Liverpool Circuit under the designation of 'Supernumerary,' though he is still entitled 'General Superintendent of the two Provinces and Newfoundland.' Next year we find him Supernumerary at Halifax, and William Bennett succeeds to the office of 'General Superintendent and Chairman.' Black was then but fifty-two years of age; his appearance was still that of a powerful man, and some of his friends blamed him for too early a retirement. But he had begun early, and had wrought unsparingly and unrestingly for full thirty years; and he felt his strength waning. He was granted a peaceful eventide of more than twenty years, spent in pastoral care of the flock at Halifax, where the whole town revered him, and in frequent preaching continued till the end. He held to the Methodism of the maritime provinces, on a smaller scale, the relation of Francis Asbury to that of the United States. He did not possess the commanding force and master will of Asbury, nor Asbury's

Spartan rigour and matchless powers of endurance ; but he had the purity of character and much of the same spiritual beauty, the same heart of love and meekness of wisdom. Although his sphere was limited and the visible results of his life's work were not relatively large, William Black deserves a place amongst the first rank of Methodist pioneers.

In 1812 Nova Scotia (with New Brunswick) and Newfoundland together reported 1,225 Church members. The Circuits on the mainland were nine, Horton, Annapolis, and Prince Edward Island having been added to those last enumerated. In the nine Circuits there were just as many itinerant Preachers, two being stationed at Halifax ; while Shelbourne, which had sadly dwindled from its first estate, was for the time unoccupied. In New Brunswick it was still the day of small things for Methodism. Apart from the little border Societies belonging to the Cumberland Circuit, there existed but the two Circuits, founded by Bishop and McColl, and they contained between them less than 300 members. The total population of Nova Scotia at this date was estimated at 60,000 or more ; that of New Brunswick at 20,000. Methodist adherents constituted barely a twentieth of the total ; Cape Breton Island, the north-eastern portion of Nova Scotia, and the northern half of New Brunswick, were as yet untouched. One-fourth of the population, mainly in Nova Scotia, were claimed by Romanism ; less than one-half—the proportion was greater in New Brunswick—were identified, in a stricter or looser sense, with the Anglican Communion, which in some parishes was decidedly leavened by Methodism.

## V

### THE MARITIME PROVINCES TO 1855

Emigration after the Napoleonic War—Methodism in the Maritime Provinces in 1818—'Protracted Meetings'—Separation of New Brunswick from Nova Scotia—A great Revival—Fruitful Extension—Humphrey Pickard—Increase in Membership—Notable Preachers—Educational Advance—The Mount Allison Academy—Controversy with the Mission House Officials—Journalistic Efforts—Bureaucratic Government—Conflict with Anglicans—The Millerite Delusion—Statistics—Slow Progress in Newfoundland—Methodist Educational Institutions—Economic Distresses—Roman Catholic Claims—A Methodist Church of British North America—Visit of Dr. Alder.

THE establishment of the Missionary Society at home (1813-18) coincided with the close of the Napoleonic War, and of the brief struggle with the United States (1812-14) arising therefrom which so greatly disturbed North American society; the enduring peace brought a flood of emigration from the British Isles. This coincidence was providential for Methodism, enabling it to multiply its forces in the colonies and to take its part in meeting the spiritual needs of the new populations overseas. In South Africa and Australia the work of our Church began with the beginnings of the Missionary Society; in British North America it took a new start, and passed out of an ill-nourished and precarious infancy into a vigorous youth. From this time also Newfoundland Methodism came into touch with that of the neighbouring mainland areas; missionary interchanges became frequent, common interests were created, and the way was prepared for the federation to be effected forty years later. We shall therefore in this chapter treat the Districts situated in the Gulf of St. Lawrence as one. Being concerned mainly with the missionary progress of Methodism in this region, our narrative will touch but lightly on the internal development of the colonial Churches.

The first stage of Methodist history in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, related in the last chapter, was covered by the period of William Black's ministry. He retired in 1812, after



securing a reinforcement of the missionary staff from England and putting his District definitely under the control of the British Conference. Up to that time it had been attached, though loosely, to the Methodism of the United States. This change took place without the conflicts which subsequently distracted the Canadian Societies ; in fact Bishop Asbury felt himself relieved by the cessation of appeals from Nova Scotia. Moreover, the recent war had strengthened pro-British feeling in the colonies, and made them shy of American Preachers.<sup>1</sup> By this date the two Manns had become Supernumeraries along with Black, while McColl, the last surviving of the pioneers, continued his labours around St. Stephen's (N.B.). Of the newer men from the mother-country, William Bennett, Black's successor in the Superintendency, William Crosscombe, and Stephen Knowlan—an Irishman of wit and intellectual force, who came to Nova Scotia in 1808 invalided from the West Indies District, were the most conspicuous. In 1817 the ranks were strengthened by the appointment from England of Robert Alder—afterwards Dr. Alder, of the Mission House—of William Burt (uncle and name-father of William Burt Pope), and Thomas Payne. Sampson Busby was transferred from Newfoundland to Prince Edward Island, to become a stalwart of the District ; John Hick served in this island for a year, and was then moved on to Quebec, Nova Scotia receiving in exchange John Bass Strong, a valuable recruit. George Miller, of Irish Palatine descent, and Adam Clarke Avard (son of Joseph Avard), enlisted for the ministry in that same year, were choice products of colonial Methodism. The former fulfilled a long course of usefulness ; Adam Avard's sun went down ere noon—' a more useful preacher of his age,' said one who knew him well, ' perhaps America never saw.' The school-master, George Orth, who in the face of persecution planted Methodism amongst his fellow Germans in the settlement of Lunenburg, and was received into the ministry in 1815, deserves mention here. Nova Scotia, while helped freely from England, was helping itself ; its home-reared Preachers were fit to stand beside the best that the Missionary Society supplied.

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting, however, to note that the American State of Maine and the bordering Province of New Brunswick by a tacit convention kept the peace at this time, and no border-raiding took place. The States Legislature decided for war by a narrow majority, chiefly Southern, and public feeling in New England was righteously averse from it—a fact going far to account for the failure of the Republicans.

In 1818 there were seventeen Circuits (including Prince Edward Island) in the District, as compared with the nine of 1812; the number of Missionaries had correspondingly increased; the Church membership increased during the six years at a slightly greater rate—from 885 to 1,689. The 50 members previously gathered in Prince Edward Island had grown to 180 in two Circuits. The new Circuits of the mainland were: Yarmouth, the south-western port and county of the peninsula, where Robert Alder began his course; Fredericton, the capital of New Brunswick, standing midway on the St. John River; Ramsheg, Horton, and Newport, situated toward the centre of Nova Scotia, with Lunenburg, near the middle of the eastern coast. Cape Breton Island, with the north-eastern counties of Nova Scotia, the extensive westward shores of New Brunswick and its central and northern regions, were as yet untouched. Abundant missionary work remained to be done in the country. In 1817 an Auxiliary to the British Missionary Society was formed for the District, which by the close of its first year was able to remit £366 to London. Two local candidates for the ministry stood before the District Synod of 1818: Robert H. Crane, the first native-born Methodist itinerant, who, after a twenty years' ministry of continuous blessing, died at St. Vincent's, in the West Indies<sup>1</sup>; and John Snowball, a youth of Yorkshire extraction, who lived to reach the seventies, itinerating through all the maritime provinces, and who combined evangelistic power with firmness of character and notable business ability.

About this time the practice was commenced of holding what were called in the colonies 'protracted meetings,' held at convenient centres and covering a succession of days. These gatherings resembled the camp meetings of American Methodism, but were convened in and around some large Church building. Evangelistic campaigns of this nature were suitable to a country of dispersed villages and lonely settlements, which the individual Preachers could rarely visit; they were carried on by concentrated effort in a given area, and

<sup>1</sup> The commercial intercourse of the West Indies with British North America facilitated exchanges between the two Missions, which had climates of an opposite character. Men debilitated by tropical heat renewed their strength for labour in the cool north, and those who had suffered from the arctic severity of the northern winter found benefit in removal for a few years to the sunny south. In course of time the Bermudas became permanently attached to the Nova Scotia District, chiefly for the above reasons.

where possible by co-operation of Churches, the Baptists freely participating with the Methodists on these occasions. Two such demonstrations were early made within the Annapolis Circuit, on the instigation of Colonel Bayard—the first in September, 1817, which long continued to be spoken of as ‘the great meeting at Nictaux,’ when 1,500 people assembled, five Methodist and two Baptist Ministers, aided by lay Preachers, occupying the platform; the second, taking place at Granville, in the ensuing year, drew a still larger assemblage, and resulted in the conversion of hundreds of people. The third of these rallies, made in 1819 at Nictaux Plains, was attended by ‘a vast concourse,’ who ‘returned to their scattered homes full of faith and the Holy Ghost, to declare what great things the Lord had done for them.’ Such efforts were taxing for those who took a leading part in them; but they yielded large ingatherings to the Churches, and their success heightened not a little the popular influence of Methodism. The ‘protracted meeting’ became a recognized evangelistic institution.

The progress of Methodism at this period was most marked on Prince Edward Island, in the extreme north of the District, and in the south about Yarmouth, Shelbourne, and Liverpool. William Crosscombe, who had toiled hard and with gratifying success for two years at the last-named Circuit, was compelled in 1819 to return to England. He subsequently resumed his labours in the west of Newfoundland. John and William Pope, who had established a business in Prince Edward Island, contributed greatly as Local Preachers to the advance of Methodism in this quarter. John (the father of William Burt Pope) was soon persuaded to give himself to the ministry. He appears on the Stations for 1820 as Robert Alder’s colleague at Charlottetown; three years later he was transferred to the West Indies. His brothers<sup>1</sup> Henry and Richard were already pioneer Missionaries in Canada; the former, whose powerful and dignified ministry extended over a full term of years, for some time laboured in Nova Scotia.

The separation of the New Brunswick from the Nova Scotia District, which came about in 1826, supplies a point of division for the history of Methodism in this field. The ecclesiastical

<sup>1</sup> A fifth brother in this gifted family, known as the Hon. Joseph Pope, who took John’s place in the farm at Bedeque (P.E.I.), rose to distinction in colonial affairs. Joseph’s son, the Hon. James College Pope, was a leading member of Sir John A. Macdonald’s administration in the early days of the Canadian dominion.



deviated from the political boundary ; to strengthen the New Brunswick District, the vale of Annapolis, on the eastern shore of the Bay of Fundy, was allotted to it. The combined membership in Society exceeded that of the year 1818 by only 535. This accession was less than might have been expected from the tide of immigration pouring upon the American shores ; it is said that nearly 6,000 new-comers from Great Britain and Ireland landed at the port of St. John (N.B.) alone. Amongst these arrivals, belonging mainly to the farming class, were a considerable number of Methodists, whom the travelling Preacher found ready to welcome his visits and to help his work around their new homes. On the other hand, the colonies felt severely the commercial depression attending the close of the wars. There was a shifting of population, especially from Halifax and the coast-towns, entailing heavy loss by removal to the States and to Canada, which depleted the Societies for a succession of years. Not till the end of this period did general prosperity return to the maritime provinces. At St. John (N.B.) Methodism was almost wrecked through the fall of the eloquent and popular James Priestley.

The Synod of 1820, held at Liverpool, was rendered memorable by an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which lasted for many months and spread its blessing over a large part of the peninsula. With Sampson Busby, the Liverpool Missionary, his neighbour William Burt (then at Horton) was associated in this work of grace ; William W. Ashley, a leading Preacher amongst the General Baptists, greatly assisted in its progress. ' Nearly every dwelling in Liverpool became ' at this season ' a place of prayer.' The first recorded conversion amongst the Micmac Indians of the region took place under this visitation. James Barr, Hugh Houston, Andrew McNutt, and Thomas Andrew S. Dewolf were ' brought in ' at the revival of 1820—the two former amongst the most honoured of Nova Scotian lay leaders during the next half-century ; the two latter were devoted friends to each other, ranking amongst its foremost young Ministers. The Methodism of these provinces was lifted by successive waves of revival, marked by a deep and serious character, which affected the most thoughtful and decided people along with careless and abandoned sinners. McNutt was a native of Shelbourne, his father an old-fashioned Presbyterian, his mother one of the company of Loyalist Methodists who came



from the States headed by Robert Barry and the Mann brothers. Dewolf also had a Methodist mother, converted under William Black's preaching. Both were young men of breeding and good education.

A notable event of the Liverpool Synod was the appearance there of Matthew Richey, an Irish youth of but seventeen years, who was presented by Priestley as a candidate for the ministry from St. John, and readily accepted. This precocious Preacher had found the way of salvation in his Presbyterian village-home in Donegal through reading a tract of John Fletcher's, and through attending the Methodist prayer-meeting. A mere boy, he began to exercise his gifts, to the conversion of several hearers, before leaving his native land. Employed at St. John as assistant master in the Grammar School, he was invited by Duncan McColl to assist in the St. Andrew's Circuit. After fifteen years' labour in this District Richey was sent farther west, and served Canadian Methodism with eminent distinction. Late in life he returned to the lower provinces. Preacher, scholar, writer, administrator, Dr. Matthew Richey was a shining light of his Church through the middle decades of last century. John Marshall and William Temple, both Englishmen, figure for the first time on the Nova Scotia Stations for 1820. Marshall came as a broken-down West Indian Missionary, but recovered to do valiant service on this field for many years. Temple was a lame man, whose infirmity led the Missionary Committee, on his offering as a candidate for the foreign work, to employ him instead in the London office. But he showed so much capacity in that sphere, and such bodily activity despite his lameness, that in the scarcity of recruits after a while they sent him abroad. The appointment was eminently justified; Temple proved a treasure in the colonial field. He officiated for long as District Secretary and Chairman in turn, and was the first Secretary of the Conference of Eastern America formed in 1855, being recognized as its ablest man of business. His spiritual qualities matched his practical ability.

James Mann's death was reported at the Synod of 1820. A man of spotless character and strict habits, and of much personal dignity and authority in discipline, he was esteemed the ablest Preacher amongst the Methodist pioneers of Nova Scotia, and won the respect of men of all ranks and Churches.

Next to the revival at Liverpool, the most notable movement in this District during the early twenties took place on the ground of William Black's first itinerancy. The work here still suffered under the blight of the Newlight perversion. The Petitcodiac valley, where Black had seen his earliest triumphs, and where his nephew, William Chapman, resided as a layman and maintained a steadfast Methodist testimony, had relapsed into the moral wilderness. Apart from the few vigorous Baptist congregations, the border region of the two provinces was sadly destitute of religious ordinances. A party of Methodists from England, wrecked on the neighbouring shore of the Bay of Fundy in 1817, sent a moving appeal for aid. Within the next few years successful steps were taken to recover the lost ground. The huge Cumberland Circuit, extending from Wallace to the Petitcodiac, was divided into manageable areas. William Burt and John Pope, his brother-in-law, were particularly useful in this advance; and along with them the young Albert Desbrisay, son of the beloved Charlottetown Rector of that name, and friend of Adam Avard, into whose place he stepped on the death of the latter in 1821. Six years later a great revival broke out in the Petitcodiac valley, which spread to the neighbouring Sussex vale and affected the whole south-east of New Brunswick. George Jackson, another invalid transferred from the West Indies, who spent four active years in the Nova Scotian ranks, distinguished himself in a war of pamphlets conducted in defence of infant baptism, which did much to vindicate Methodist teaching through the provinces. Our Church membership was doubled on the ground of the old Cumberland Circuit between 1818 and 1826. Not till 1841, however, did Methodism boast a chapel of its own at Amherst, Black's parental home.

The District was robbed of Robert Alder for the benefit of Montreal, while Jackson went home to England in 1826. With these losses came the gain of Robert Young—wise, graceful, winning, fervent, energetic, elected thirty years later President of the British Conference (1856), after serving as its delegate to Australia at a critical time—who was all too soon snatched away from Nova Scotia. He raised the influence of the Halifax pulpit to its highest point.

A fruitful extension of the Mission to the north-east of the

peninsula began in 1821-22. An isolated band of Methodists, unvisited by any Missionary, had existed there for some time. These gathered round Charlotte Ann Newton, the niece of Joshua Newton, and a lady of strong Methodist character. The arrival of young Arthur McNutt early in 1822 gave the little company the leadership it required. McNutt held meetings, attended with spiritual power, on his own initiative, and reported his doings to the Halifax Synod of 1822, seeking its direction. The Synod sent him back as its accredited agent, and he laboured along the shore of Guysborough County with continued success. Circumstances delayed the enlisting of this ardent Missionary, and his name does not appear on the Stations until 1826; meanwhile he had laid the foundations of Methodism in this long-neglected corner of Nova Scotia.

The partition of the Districts, while it left each small in numerical membership, acted as a stimulus to progress. Richard Williams was imported from Lower Canada to preside over the New Brunswick section, while Stephen Bamford remained for the present at the head of affairs in Nova Scotia. Williams, who had 'travelled' ten years, and was now in the prime of life and a vigorous but wary disciplinarian, proved himself an effective chief. He had the talent for Chairmanship, and knew how on occasion to 'magnify his office'; he never allowed his Church to be slighted in any company. One of his first duties was to take over from the venerated Duncan McColl the charge of the Circuit and the Church property he had built up around his home at St. Stephen's, and to put the work in that quarter upon a regular Methodist footing. The whole District was evidently ripe for advance, and the Missionary Committee was able fortunately to reinforce its staff. William Smithson and Michael Pickles, a pair of Yorkshiremen, were sent out for New Brunswick in 1827; hither also a couple of young Missionaries were transferred in 1829 and 1830 in hope of better health from the West Indies, both of Lincolnshire extraction. These were Enoch Wood (an associate in youth of the famous Thomas Cooper), who laboured for half a century in British North America, growing to be the most influential man in its whole ministry; and Samuel Joll, who served a less conspicuous but a useful part in the ranks for a goodly term of years. Henry Daniel, who was



appointed from England, lived to be President of the Conference of Eastern British America ; his career in the maritime provinces was such as to lead up to that dignity. His companion, Robert Snelgrove, a young man from whom great things were expected, lost his life by falling overboard on the outward voyage. Several useful itinerants were raised up about this time among the Local Preachers of the two Districts.

It was now possible to meet the appeals coming from the newly occupied counties of eastern and northern New Brunswick, where not a few emigrant Methodist families had made their homes. By the year 1830 five fresh Circuits had been added to the six which made up the District at its formation. In August, 1828, John Strong, in answer to an invitation from a band of Irish settlers, set out from his station at Fredericton, and rode four days north-east through the almost unbroken forests then covering the interior of the province, until he reached the towns of Newcastle and Chatham lying on the opposite banks toward the mouth of the great Miramichi River, which flows into the St. Lawrence. Here he found a rapidly growing population of several thousand, with no Protestant Church or stated ministry. Of his congregation gathered in the school-house at Newcastle the Preacher writes :

Many were without, with hats off and as still as the night. After the service was ended, and before I could get out, the people flooded in in tears, telling me that they were children of Methodists, that they had never seen the face of a Methodist Preacher since they had left their native land, and begging me for their sakes and for the sake of their children to abide with them, or to use my influence to send them a Missionary.

On the journey to and fro between Fredericton and Chatham, Strong again and again came across lonely settlers, who prayed for the advent of some messenger of the Gospel, which they and their children were forgetting in the wilderness. In 1830 Michael Pickles was stationed on the Miramichi, and carved out a Circuit which took him a week to travel round. He was followed by Enoch Wood, who did most effective pioneer work in this section of the District. Visits were made along the coast extending northwards to Bathurst, a rising town on the Bay of Chaleur, which bounds the province in that direction, and southwards as far as Richibucto, situated half-way between the Miramichi and Petitcodiac Circuits. Early



in the thirties these new centres were added to the list of Circuit Stations. At New Bandon, near Bathurst, Pickles discovered a group of Irish Methodists from Cork, who had for years maintained their class-meetings and kept their light burning, until their Church reached them at this far-off outpost. They were overjoyed to see him and to hear the sound of the Gospel once more.

About the same time the Fredericton Circuit, led by Temple and Strong, extended itself north-westwards along the upper waters of the St. John River. The Circuit of Woodstock (to which post Robert Snelgrove had been designated) was formed in 1832, and Andover was subsequently reached. These villages lay near the Maine border, where the New Brunswick District joined hands with the Methodist Episcopal Church. Many disbanded soldiers had received lands in the Carleton County, of which Woodstock was the centre; others had pushed their way up from the lower St. John to this fertile region. In the latter migration Methodist families participated, and these supplied helpers to the pioneer itinerants as they pressed northwards. The most notable of the local allies was a Scotchwoman, by name Janet Johnson, who removed with her husband in 1833 from Fredericton to Andover, where she started a Sunday School, circulated the Scriptures, and became as a mother in Israel to many souls around her habitation. By the year 1838 four Circuits had grown out of McColl's old parish at St. Stephen's, on the western border.

The lower St. John Valley, covered by the St. John, Sheffield, and Fredericton Circuits, was the scene of a succession of fruitful revivals during the years 1826-39, while a stream of immigration flowed continuously along this channel. The conditions were favourable to the growth of Methodism; under such leaders as Busby, Strong, and Enoch Wood, with Desbrisay, McNutt, and Smithson for their auxiliaries, the opportunities were turned to the best account. Methodism more than recovered from the damage suffered through Priestley's declension at the first-named post. There, as at Fredericton, our Church secured during the thirties the commanding position it has continued to hold. In 1826, 18. 9, and again in 1835, revivals took place in the Sheffield Circuit—in the first and last instances under the ministry of Albert Desbrisay. The movement of 1835 was widespread, and especially

happy in its results, quickening other Churches along with our own. At Fredericton Enoch Wood was 'travelling' in 1833-34; and Lemuel Allan Wilmot—a brilliant young lawyer of Loyalist descent, just then rising into political fame—was attracted by the ministry and friendship of this man. He sought and found the way of salvation; and along with him Henry Fisher, who in the course of time became Director of Education for the province. Undergoing a thorough conversion to God, Wilmot showed himself to the end of a long life, amidst many temptations, an exemplary and unworldly Christian man, and a devoted servant of the Methodist Church. He was raised to the Bench as Judge of the Supreme Court of New Brunswick, after he had done much to liberalize the constitutional development of the province. Repeatedly, in more than one direction, he shielded the Nonconformists of New Brunswick from the Anglican intolerance and usurpation which had been particularly marked in this province; under his leadership the foundations of religious equality were laid for future times. Judge Wilmot exercised on behalf of his Church a public and social influence resembling that which belonged to Colonel Bayard in the Annapolis valley.

Similar progress marked this period in the old Petitcodiac area covering the Westmoreland and Albert Counties in south-eastern New Brunswick, and in the stretch of country between the Petitcodiac and St. John Rivers. The memorable awakening of 1836 made Sackville, near the Nova Scotia border, henceforth a focus of Methodism for the maritime provinces. Charles Frederic Allison, son of the John Allison referred to on page 294, was one of the many brought to God at this joyful time; he became a chief amongst the lay princes of colonial Methodism, and founder of the Mount Allison University. Several Local Preachers of ability were raised up to this part of the field, whose work promoted the consolidation and extension of Methodism in the south of the province. Much the same story might be told of the Annapolis country, which Nova Scotia had yielded to the other District. This neighbourhood owed much to Peter Sleep, a revivalist of extraordinary power, who died in 1842 after an itinerancy of eight years. The preaching of this young man 'was neither eloquent nor profound,' but the Holy Spirit approved it 'by

signs following'; he was always in request for the 'protracted meetings,' and was long remembered as a man of God in and around the Annapolis Circuit. In general the native-bred Ministers appear to have been more effective Missioners, while the English Missionaries excelled in gifts of teaching and ruling. On the suggestion of Bishopsgate, a 'Visiting Missionary' ('District Missionary' we should call him) was set apart to traverse the District as a roving evangelist. Arthur McNutt held this post in the first instance, and Peter Sleep after him. The experiment was successful; but the scantiness of the staff compelled its discontinuance. The harvest was constantly outgrowing the strength and number of the reapers.

Williams was removed in 1831 to occupy the chair of the Lower Canada District, and Strong succeeded to his office in New Brunswick, retaining it after William's return in the next year. Temple took over this charge on Strong's visiting England in 1836; the latter, however, returned to the colony three years afterwards and finished his course there, dying at a ripe old age in 1870. These three were excellent Chairmen, and the District flourished under their care.

The year 1837 witnessed the entrance into the ministry of two true-born sons of American Methodism, destined to eminence in the service of their Church. Humphrey Pickard was born in 1814 of a New England Puritan stock, and was reared up amongst the Methodists of Fredericton. Receiving a scholarly training under Dr. Wilbur Fisk, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, he was led by Enoch Wood to enter the ministry in New Brunswick. The first University graduate amongst Methodist Preachers north of the States, he was the first-elected Principal of Mount Allison College, its spiritual and intellectual founder. As Dr. Pickard, he stood for a generation at the head of the educational work of Methodism in Eastern British America. The career of Samuel Dwight Rice extended over a wider range, and was equally distinguished with that of Humphrey Pickard. His father, who belonged to a family of note in the State of Maine, had removed across the border to Woodstock in pursuit of his profession as a doctor, and threw in his lot with the struggling Methodist folk in this new township. In his youth Dwight Rice became warmly attached to Arthur McNutt, whom he always spoke of as his 'father in the Gospel.' He was educated in the



States, where he happened to be the fellow student of the poet Longfellow. In his probation, though of precarious health, he underwent rough experiences, out of which he grew into manly strength and conspicuous efficiency, combining with spiritual vigour a superior style and finish and much popular attractiveness. His voice, however, was permanently damaged through early hardships, and this infirmity limited, while it by no means neutralized, Rice's pulpit power. After travelling widely in the maritime Districts, he removed to Upper Canada, where, as Dr. Rice, he rose to the highest Connexional influence. Alexander W. Macleod, also honoured in later life with an American Doctorate of Divinity, affords another instance of the way in which colonial Methodism claimed for its ministry the most gifted of its own children. This young man, whose name appears on the Stations first in 1833, sprang from one of the Scottish Highland families of the Nashwaak valley. He was favoured with a liberal education. Prevented by an accident from joining the missionary corps thirty years earlier, his father had proved a valuable lay helper in St. John. The son travelled first in the New Brunswick, and later in the Nova Scotia, District. He wielded a ready and skilful pen, and edited the *Wesleyan* on its first publication in Halifax in 1838. MacLeod was the leader of the early literary adventures of his Church in the maritime provinces until his removal to the United States in 1854. A Church that could rear such Ministers as Desbrisay and McNutt, Alexander MacLeod, Humphrey Pickard, Dwight Rice, and such laymen as the Allisons, Bayards, and Judge Wilmot, was evidently ripening for independence.

By the Centenary year (1839) the New Brunswick District had nearly trebled its Church membership since its inception in 1826, reporting now 2,638 persons in Society—Methodist adherents were probably five times as numerous; the Circuits had multiplied from 6 to 17, and the active Ministers from 7 to 23. The travelling Preachers now visited every section of the province; almost everywhere they found open doors, and were instrumental in bringing sinners to repentance and gathering the sheep of Christ's flock that were scattered abroad. Only the lack of labourers limited the expansion of Methodism at this time.

During the above period Nova Scotian Methodism scarcely



advanced *pari passu* with that of the younger province. While its Church membership grew from 1,303 to 2,813, the number of Circuits and of Ministers but slightly exceeded the earlier figure of 13. The numerical comparison indicates the fact that the work of Methodism had become less missionary in the older colony; there were fewer immigrants to provide for here, and less new ground to occupy. Guysborough, the north-eastern county first missioned by Arthur McNutt, now had a settled place on the Circuit list. To it were added, from 1830 onwards, the Stations of Sydney and Ship's Harbour on Cape Breton Island. With this advance made, the network of the Mission fairly covered the whole of Nova Scotia. Until the beginning of the century Cape Breton was thinly peopled by French fishermen and cultivators; Sydney, the capital, was a mere village. In 1802 the first Highland immigrants arrived; a steady stream set in from this quarter, until the Gaelic tongue became as familiar in the island as in Scotland itself. The discovery of workable coal gave a new value to this little colony, which previously had a separate administration, but was now annexed to Nova Scotia, and brought an influx of trade and population. In 1830 it was estimated that three-fifths of the 20,000 inhabitants were Roman Catholics, mostly of the old French stock, the remainder being chiefly Gaelic-speaking Presbyterians. Beside the Roman priests there were but two clergymen in the island, the Anglican garrison-chaplain and Rector of the Sydney parish, and a single Presbyterian Minister outside of Sydney, a stranger to the Highland speech of his flock. The latter wrote in 1834 :

I really believe there is not a place in the whole world, professing Christianity, where are so many families so near to each other and so utterly destitute as our poor countrymen in this island are.

Evidently Methodism was needed here. It had existed at Cape Breton ever since 1810, when William Charlton, a pious English fisherman who had previously visited the island, and after this found Christ amongst the Methodists of Boston (U.S.), returned to bring his new-found Gospel to his friends on this shore. Settling at a fishing-village on Gabarus Bay, single-handed he gathered round him a Society of several score of converted people. When the evangelical Sydney Rector, Hibbert Binney, visited Gabarus—the first Protestant

Minister seen there—he found sixty-two persons of all ages awaiting baptism, the fruit of Charlton's testimony. Binney left Sydney a few years later, and was succeeded by a clergyman of opposite type, whose preaching repelled spiritual hearers, and amongst them Judge Marshall, the devout Chief Justice of Cape Breton. This gentleman and his friends, after seeking vainly in various quarters for an evangelical Preacher who would settle in Sydney, at last applied to the Methodist Synod of Nova Scotia, the Judge visiting this assembly in May, 1829, to urge the request for help. In answer to the appeal, James Hennigar was dispatched at once, pending the arrival of a probationer from England; next year two Missionaries were stationed on Cape Breton Island. A second opening presented itself at Ship's Harbour (afterwards named *Port Hawkesbury*), an inlet of the Strait of Canso, on the western side of the island, remote from Sydney. Here a Guernsey man of business named Andrew le Brocq, aided by his friends, had built a small chapel, which he invited the Methodists to occupy. To Ship's Harbour accordingly the second Cape Breton Missionary was assigned. Our Church had thus a favourable start in Cape Breton Island, and rapidly gained influence. The Presbyterian Communion was quickened through its activity, a converted Highlander beginning to publish Christ to his fellow countrymen in their own tongue. This movement led to the raising up of a Gaelic-Scottish ministry in Cape Breton Island. While our Preachers attracted comparatively large congregations, for many years they were unable to gather out of the Franco-Scottish population more than small Societies. In 1839 the island, with its two Circuits, reported 156 Church members.

At Halifax the best Preachers were stationed in succession, and Methodism possessed a circle of laymen of high Christian character and loyalty. But the Halifax Church during the later twenties and the thirties saw several vicissitudes. It suffered from disturbing incidents, and Church discipline was often difficult. The town was liable to the dissipations and excitements attaching to the life of a great naval port. It had a large floating population; the military, to whom Halifax Methodism gave great attention, were constantly coming and going. Many soldiers were led to God at this station. One of the most notable of these soldier-conversions was that of

Robert Cooney, an Irish Romanist brought by a comrade to the Methodist chapel, who at the close of the service said to the Preacher: 'I am a poor ignorant Catholic. Your sermon has touched me; I want you to teach me to be better.' Cooney soon found the way of peace; his habits were reformed, and he began a course of mental improvement which made him a most useful Christian worker. He had peculiar tact and winningness; it is said that while in hospital, not long after his conversion (1832), 'by his wise use of their own prayer-book he helped not less than a hundred Roman Catholic soldiers to trust in a previously unknown Saviour.'

On his discharge from the Army in 1840 Cooney made his home in Halifax, where for many years he laboured as class-leader and Sunday-school Superintendent with marvellous success. A second large and handsome church, holding a thousand worshippers, was erected here; a week before its opening, on September 7, 1834, the venerable William Black passed away, falling a victim to the cholera then scourging the city.

About the same time Methodism was weakened in Halifax by a secession which illustrated the scandals and schisms that are apt to arise in a colonial Church. A former English Local Preacher of decided ability, but of eccentric habits and unruly spirit, who had pursued an irregular course in the States, presented himself to the Wesleyan authorities of the city in October, 1832. His credentials being unsatisfactory, he was refused the Wesleyan pulpit. He took to the streets, where his evangelical fervour and powers of speech, aided by his strange appearance, drew a large following. Before long he secured the use of a public hall, and by the next spring his congregation were able to build him a church; but in a few months division arose amongst them, and their pastor threatened to depart. He invited a clever young Preacher, recently dismissed from the Wesleyan ministry for reasons of discipline, to occupy the new pulpit, which for a while maintained its popularity; but the two men quarrelled, and the movement collapsed. At the height of this controversy, in 1833, the strong and judicious Richard Knight was called across from Newfoundland to preside over the Nova Scotia District, with Matthew Richey for his colleague in Halifax; revival took place under their joint ministry during the winter



of 1834-35, which more than repaired the rents made by strife. The hunger of the townsfolk for preaching is pointed to as a cause militating at this time against the extension of Methodism. Three sermons every Sunday were required in the city pulpits ; and the Ministers weakly gave way to the demand, with the result that country places were neglected and the Circuit system defectively worked.

Of the thirteen Missionaries serving this District in 1826 there remained on the ground in 1839 Henry Pope, John Marshall, and Thomas H. Davies—men of sterling worth. Stephen Bamford had retired ; William Temple and George Miller had been transferred to the neighbouring District ; Matthew Richey was teaching at the newly opened Cobourg Academy in Upper Canada. James Gilbert Hennigar, a son of Nova Scotian Methodism called to the ministry in 1824, and John Snowball, had crossed over to Newfoundland, where they served devotedly for many years. Several had removed to Canada, or gone home to England. Death had claimed Robert H. Crane. William Crosscombe, after a prolonged absence, was welcomed back in 1838 to the scene of his early labours.

The outstanding men received from England during this period were William Webb, William Smith, Matthew Cranswick, Charles Churchill. Churchill laboured in the province for twenty-four years, filling in turn every office of usefulness in its ministry, and adding literary talent to his powers as preacher and pastor. Cranswick, whom the writer recollects in his later years spent in England as a dignified and gentlemanly old Minister, was much admired in the pulpit during his shorter term of missionary service. Webb and Smith were men of pioneering enterprise and pastoral devotion, who gave their full strength to Nova Scotia ; the latter was accounted a superior theologian. Frederick Smallwood, arriving with Churchill in 1838, proved a greater popular force than any of those named ; but his intensity of spirit and neglect of bodily health brought his ministry to an end in mid-course. Charles Dewolfe (afterwards Dr. Dewolfe) was a fine example of colonial talent. Converted amongst the Baptists while a law-student in Halifax, discussion and conviction brought him over to Methodism. Before long he was called to the ministry. Sent to England for training at the Hoxton



Institution, he returned well equipped to enter the provincial itinerancy in 1838. In his mature years he filled the Theological Chair at Mount Allison, and was one of the early Conference Presidents of Eastern British America.

The Methodist Centenary of 1839 was celebrated with loyal enthusiasm in the maritime provinces, which raised together more than £2,000 for the general fund. Out of its poverty, Newfoundland added nearly £500 to this sum. By this time the Methodism of the island District was seventy years old, that of the adjoining mainland less than sixty.

For the last sixteen years (1839-55), during which the British Conference had missionary charge of these colonies, the story of the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Districts may be told as one tale. The leaders of Methodism in the provinces had been for a long time much concerned about the lack of educational provision for their children. They were obliged to send them for schooling to the United States or to England, at heavy cost and with risk to health and character, or to place them in local institutions, from which Methodist influence was jealously excluded. The Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Baptists had already founded their denominational Academies or Colleges, receiving more or less substantial aid from the State. The subject had been mooted in the Synod as early as 1828, when circulars were issued through the country inviting co-operation for this object. The popularity of the scheme obstructed its success, for rivalry sprang up between different centres, each offering what it deemed the best location for the projected school. The Missionary Committee in London endorsed the scheme, but could afford no financial help. Private Schools sprang up under Methodist auspices, which partially supplied the need, but at the same time created vested interests unfavourable to any combined public effort. Charles Allison had this question laid upon his heart; he wrote in January, 1839, an urgent letter on the subject to the Chairman of his District, conveying the offer of an excellent site at Sackville—a position central for the two provinces—and along with this the promise of a large contribution to the building fund of the Academy and of a handsome yearly subscription. These definite and generous proposals terminated the long hesitation. Robert Alder, then visiting Nova Scotia on the centenary deputation from England, was taken into counsel. The support

of the Districts concerned, including Newfoundland, was secured ; the approval of the Missionary Committee followed. The Legislature of New Brunswick voted a subsidy. So the plans for the Mount Allison Academy quickly took shape, and its foundation was laid on July 9, 1840. Within two years the structure was raised—a handsome building, capable of housing eighty boarders, and with educational plant superior to anything hitherto provided in the three provinces. Out of the 30,000 dollars spent on the erection three-fourths had been subscribed before the opening. With a young Minister in the St. John Circuit, Humphrey Pickard, as Principal, the saintly Albert Desbrisay was associated as ‘ Governor and Chaplain ’—both men of colonial birth. The college was filled from the outset, and soon had to be enlarged for additional scholars. Before long steps were taken to plant on the Mount Allison property a parallel Academy for girls, which was opened in 1854 and placed, with the former establishment, under Dr. Pickard’s direction. Charles Allison was the chief promoter of this second enterprise as of the former. Within a few years of the union of the three Districts in one Conference (1855) a Theological College was added to the cluster of buildings ; step by step the present University has grown up on this spacious site, supplying a chief educational centre and seat of learning for British America. The Methodist Senate of Mount Allison has the distinction of being the first University body in the British Empire to open its degrees without restriction to women. Charles Allison was a man of moderate wealth, but of whole-souled and far-sighted devotion to the higher interests of his Church and country. He gave his mind and fortune to the creating of an institution which is destined to bear his name as long as the English tongue and Methodist scholarship shall endure.

Two controversies arose simultaneously in the last period of tutelage of British American Methodism which served to quicken the aspirations of the colonists towards self-government. One of these was occasioned in 1833 by the British Conference, attaching the designation ‘ Assistant Missionary,’ which had for some time been used to distinguish Native Ministers on foreign Mission Fields, to the names of men called out on all missionary Circuits. Applied to brethren of the same race and culture as their colleagues from the old country, the

adjective was offensive to colonial feeling—an 'abominable appendage,' the high-spirited S. D. Rice called it—and particularly unsuitable to the class of recruits the provinces were furnishing for the ministry. It seemed to depreciate local candidature, and discouraged the growth of self-respect and the eliciting of colonial talent and resource which it was essential for the Missionary Society to foster. The English Missionaries resented the phrase equally with their American brethren. It was admitted that men called to the colonial ministry should depend on colonial maintenance, and should not look for a place in the English itinerancy; but the badge 'Assistant' conveyed another meaning, and implied a difference of status which had no existence in fact. In the correspondence which took place upon this question the home authorities do not shine; they betray something of the stiffness of British officialism, the untactfulness and disregard of provincial sentiments and rights which have in former times marked the relations of England with her children overseas. However, in the course of the forties the obnoxious epithet was dropped; 'Native Ministers' was substituted for 'Assistant Missionaries' in strictly foreign countries, and no distinction of the terms was made on the colonial Stations.

The other grievance we refer to was more than a matter of title and etiquette. As colonial Methodism grew in intelligence and influence it began, about the year 1830, to desire a recognized organ in the press, and something in the shape of local periodical literature. In order to supply this necessity, a modest monthly was started in 1832, under the auspices of the two maritime Districts, entitled '*The Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*.' The Missionary Committee in London peremptorily suppressed this promising endeavour—first, because its success would impair the sale of the British Connexional periodicals (a strange survival of the trade-jealousy of the old 'Colonial System'); secondly, because the Missionaries concerned might involve themselves in pecuniary loss. Temple and his allies in the project had little respect for these arguments, but they submitted to the authority which enforced them, and the *Magazine* expired after four months' issues. It was absurd to suppose that the needs of the colonial Methodists, who in common with their kindred in the States had an appetite for journalistic literature, could be



satisfied with publications a month old imported from England, in which their affairs received a distant and occasional glance.

In 1838 a new attempt was resolved on, and the first number appeared of a small fortnightly published at Halifax under the title of *The Wesleyan*, edited by Macleod and Churchill and supervised by a Nova Scotian District Committee. This well-conducted paper was discontinued in consequence of the frowns of Bishopsgate two years later, to the chagrin of provincial Methodists. The Missionary Committee went as far as to forbid its agents to 'encourage or in any way connect themselves with' local organs of the press assuming the Methodist name. This policy had some justification in the contention which had gathered around the *Christian Guardian* in Canada and its outspoken and combative editor, Egerton Ryerson. But the movement should have been guided into right channels and not repressed<sup>1</sup>; the patience with which the veto was borne is more to be admired than the temper in which it was imposed. The Mission House at that period was directed by a wonderfully strong and able Secretariat, and the danger attaching to official weight and prestige made itself felt in the matter we have dwelt upon. A powerful bureaucracy is always under the temptation to *over-govern*; the tendency to slight local opinion and the judgement of responsible men on the spot, to be swayed by preconceptions and stereotyped rules is the easily besetting sin of central governments. At length, in 1848, Dr. Humphrey Pickard, then on a visit to England, succeeded by private representations in removing the obstinate prejudices of the London Secretaries against the literary ambitions of colonial Methodism, and consent was secured for the establishment of a Methodist newspaper of which Ephraim Evans, at one time editor of the *Christian Guardian*, and Pickard were made the responsible managers, the editorship being entrusted to Alexander Macleod. So *The Wesleyan* was launched once more in April, 1849, as a weekly paper for maritime Methodism; from this date it has held on its way as the recognized Connexional organ, and flourishes to the present day.

The attempts of the Anglican Episcopal Church to secure

<sup>1</sup> Writing to William Temple on the subject, Enoch Wood justly says: 'The suppression of the *Magazine* was impolitic, to speak in the mildest terms. It would have lived and been a great blessing; we have influence and means sufficient to support a book-room and press of our own.'



State support and a privileged position in the colonies, and to combat by these means the progress of Nonconformity, hindered the work of the Gospel, and affronted the spirit of a people devoted to civil equality. The British Wesleyan authorities of that time, with their tenderness for the Church of England and their traditional deference to 'the Establishment,' were troubled by these manifestations. The differences of judgement arising became acute in Canada, and led to a temporary separation from the Missionary Society. But the same contention agitated the lower provinces; its existence partly explains Bishopsgate's apprehensions as to the development of a local Methodist press. So far back as 1812 the House of Assembly of Nova Scotia condemned the employment of provincial revenues for the support of the Anglican Church. The nominated Council of the province—an administrative board on which Anglican dignitaries sat—virtually ruled the country until it was abolished in 1837; this authority laid on 'dissenters,' who formed the majority of the people, irritating disabilities and restrictions. In the State of New Brunswick, where the Church of England was relatively more powerful, this ascendancy was contemptuously asserted. Nonconformist Ministers were required to take out special licences to preach, for which substantial fees were imposed—a rule giving unfriendly officials means of constant annoyance. Not till 1847 was the power of solemnizing marriages granted to Ministers of all Churches on equal terms. The evils resulting from the former usage confining the right of legal celebration to the Anglican clergy, when Ministers of the privileged Church were few and far between, may be imagined. The Missionaries, although the most peaceable of men, were compelled in vindication of their office, and in protection of their people, to take part in the battle for religious equality. This conflict coloured the history of Methodism, as it affected the development of the colonies themselves, through the early and middle decades of the century.

By the year 1839 the Circuits making up the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Districts had been mapped out, covering the two provinces; the work of Methodism in this area had assumed its settled form. During the sixteen years elapsing till the date of independence, the Circuits steadily grew in membership and in powers of self-direction and self-support. The Church had

created its educational institutions, and, so far as it was permitted, its literary organs. Its ministerial staff became more permanent, and was headed by experienced chiefs whose character commanded the confidences of their people and the respect of the colonial public. Religious liberty was secured and a barrier raised against Anglican encroachments. This may be called the era of consolidation for Methodism in the maritime districts, as the previous epoch (1826-39) was that of *church extension*, and the earlier time that of *missionary planting and experiment*.

We must be content to notice briefly the more remarkable occurrences of the time affecting particular parts of the twin Districts, beside those of general import already narrated. The earlier forties were mastered by spiritual prosperity in this field, the Church membership increasing by no less than 3,000. The years 1840-42 witnessed 'an unprecedented revival, which left no Circuit untouched between Halifax and Yarmouth.' The country at this time was seething with political excitement due to the Canadian rebellion of 1837 and its consequences, coinciding with a period of strained relations and boundary disputes between the United States and England. A spiritual ebb-tide, attributed to the angry state of public affairs, followed the flood of blessing the Church had enjoyed. The Halifax and Liverpool Societies were diminished by the withdrawal of their negro members, numbering several hundreds, who associated themselves with one of the bodies of coloured Methodists in the States.

The Millerite delusion of New England, which culminated in 1843, greatly disturbed the provinces, affecting especially the St. John and Charlottetown Circuits. This agitation carried away a number of Local Preachers—an order notably strong in Prince Edward Island, whose inflammatory Millenarianism scandalized sober-minded people and threw whole congregations into confusion. The temperate exercise of discipline mitigated the trouble; before long the failure of Miller's prognostications brought this strange episode of American religious life to an end.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The originator of this movement was William Miller, an American Baptist Preacher, who interpreted the Book of Daniel and the Apocalypse to the effect that our Lord's Second Coming was due on April 15, 1843. When this date passed Miller revised his reckoning, fixing the event for October 22, in the same year. His heralds were sent out far and wide, and intense excitement was created in American Churches. In evangelical circles in England Pre-millenarianism was rife at this time; the much-respected and catholic-spirited clergyman, Edward Bickersteth, with whom a prominent Charlottetown Local Preacher was in correspondence, advocated views of this complexion.

Trouble of a different kind arose in 1845 at Yarmouth, where a scurrilous anonymous pamphlet appeared, attacking Methodist administration and charging the Preachers with misappropriation of public funds and dishonest money-taking. The publication was traced to its authors, whom Richard Knight, the District Chairman, promptly challenged and confuted in a town's meeting. In the later forties the provinces suffered severe commercial depression ; emigration succeeded to excessive immigration, and local Methodism lost many of its valued helpers and promising young men. The position of the colonial ministry was secured in the later years of the period by the establishment on the English model of a fund for pensioning Supernumeraries and Ministers' widows.

In the extreme eastern and south-western sections of the field marked progress was made during the early fifties ; the sluggish Guysborough Circuit, under the ministry of William McCarty, in 1851-52 experienced a powerful visitation of the Spirit of God, and again in 1855. New Societies were formed and new churches built, giving Methodism at length a firm footing in the District. The four years of Richard Knight's superintendency (1849-53) brought similar blessings to the Societies of St. John (N.B.) and its neighbourhood, where so many spiritual triumphs had been witnessed. An awful calamity befell this city in the August of 1854, when Asiatic cholera, appearing first in the port, carried off in a short time 1,500 lives, the mortality amounting to fifteen per cent. of the population. The five local Methodist Ministers bore themselves bravely, and came out of the crisis unscathed ; but the hero of the campaign was William Mumford, an old soldier, at this time caretaker of the St. Germain's Chapel, who served as chaplain and sexton to the stricken people.

Death had no terrors for him ; persons in a dying state, deserted by their friends, looked to Mumford as a ministering angel. Unassisted, he often laid the dead in their coffins and had them carried to burial. He worked and lived through the whole plague, and came off more than conqueror.

The improvement in means of transit effected about the middle of the century drew the colonial Districts nearer together, and prepared the way for connexional Methodist union, as it did for the political union of the provinces subsequently achieved. The railway system was still in the future,



but steamships were on the waters, for this part of the world linking together the deeply indented coasts ; at the same time excellent high-roads were built across the country, and stage-coaches began to ply regularly from town to town. While the influx of colonists abated in volume, the colonies conspicuously advanced in agriculture, in education, and in the general appliances of life.

The statistics subjoined exhibit the growth made by the Methodism of this region in the sixteen years preceding the establishment of the Conference of Eastern British America in 1855. The two Districts existing at the latter date are found divided into six—viz. Halifax, St. John, Charlottetown, Fredericton, Sackville, and Annapolis—two in Nova Scotia ; the Sackville District extends on both sides of the border-line. The former 33 Circuits have become 56 (including Bermuda, which is attached to the Halifax District) ; 69 travelling Preachers (including the staff of Mount Allison Institution) replace the previous 37. The returns for 1854 credit Nova Scotia and Bermuda with 5,730 Church members, this number nearly doubling that of the year 1839. The New Brunswick membership has increased in a smaller proportion, being at the later date 4,222, instead of 2,638. The rate of increase was considerably lower in the years after than in those before 1839, a diminution corresponding to the slackened rate of immigration. For the colonies at large, as for the Methodist Church, which was an important factor in their making, the forties and early fifties constituted an era of internal development rather than of external accession—a time not so much for gathering fresh material as for building up and assimilating material already gathered.

In concluding Chapter III. we left the Newfoundland District at the point where, about the year 1816, its work, hitherto extremely difficult and precarious, had reached an effective footing. By this date the accessible country was divided into Circuits and the Methodist Mission extended along the whole eastern and southern shores. During the forty years that followed progress continued to be slow and laborious. This oldest of British settlements remained after two centuries and a half pretty much what it was at the beginning—a huge fishing and sealing station, thronged in summer by visitors engaged



for the season in the all-engrossing trade. The interior of the island was but half explored; its agricultural and mineral wealth neglected or unknown. The bulk of the inhabitants were either fishing-people or employed in industries subsidiary to the staple occupation. Dependent on the merchants and contractors, they were commonly paid in kind instead of money; their consequent improvidence and lack of resources in the soil rendered the population liable to famine in bad fishing seasons, the Methodist Missionaries of those amongst whom they laboured sharing the hardships and much of the poverty. Except in the south-east, behind St. John's, farming was little pursued; inland settlers were few.

Between 1816 and 1855 the Methodists in Society multiplied from 500 to 2,586—that is, by more than fivefold. The Circuits had multiplied from 6 to 13; the Ministers employed were 14 in place of the earlier 9. This growth was smaller than that of any other colonial Mission, but it had overtaken the lagging advance of population. The larger part of the increase took place during the first twenty years; in 1836 the Circuits numbered 12, and the Society membership 1,747.

The prosperity of Newfoundland culminated in the period of the French wars, 1793–1815. A commercial collapse followed, in which the island, depending on a single industry, suffered beyond the mainland colonies. Notwithstanding, the increase of staff that accompanied the starting of the Missionary Society and the separation of this District in 1815 greatly stimulated the work of Methodism. During the winter of 1819–20 a blessed revival was experienced in the Circuit of Island Cove and Perlican, the old field of John Hawkins' labours, under the ministry of James Hickson. Around Placentia Bay, and beyond it westwards along the south coast, as on the east coast about Bonavista, a wide itinerancy was prosecuted, in which John Lewis, John Haigh, Hickson, and Richard Knight were especially active during the twenties. With these should be counted the energetic and stirring John Corlett, whom we shall meet later in the West Indies; and Simon Noall, who had all the qualifications of a pioneer missionary except a stout physical constitution—his work in this climate was ended in four years (1824–28).

Much of the seed sown beside Newfoundland waters, the resort of seamen and fishers from all quarters, came to be

reaped in other lands. Cases like those of Le Sueur, the father of Channel Island Methodism, who was brought to God in Newfoundland, were not infrequent. George Morley, in visiting the Irish Missions some years later, found himself the guest in some remote spot of a former Roman Catholic converted under the preaching of John Lewis at Burin; 'thus,' he writes, 'the labours of a Missionary in Newfoundland have opened to us a door in Ireland.'

The lack of provision for Christian or even legal marriage was a chronic scandal in Newfoundland, aggravated by the exclusive claim of the Anglican Church in this respect. For hundreds of miles together, in a country absolutely roadless, no clergyman was to be found; irregular unions were customary amongst Protestants in the greater part of the island. Remedial legislation was prompter here than in the neighbouring colonies; in 1824

all Ministers and religious teachers, not engaged in secular business, became legally authorized to perform the marriage ceremony in any case where the contracting parties could not reach some church or chapel belonging to the Established Church without inconvenience.

This provision fell short of religious equality; but it remedied a crying evil, and was made full use of by the travelling Preachers, who were the first to bring Christian order and decency, with the light of the Gospel, to many a Newfoundland inlet.

During the early twenties the question of public education was agitated in the colony; several of the Missionaries made strong representations on the subject in their letters home.

In 1819 John Walsh writes from Blackhead:

Only a few in my Circuit are able to read the word of God. It often draws from my heart a sigh of pity when I look round me from the pulpit and see many of the people unable to take up a hymn- or prayer-book, to join in the worship of God.

It is to be noticed that our early Missionaries in Newfoundland, from Coughlan onwards, generally used the Prayer-book of the Church of England; their hearers were of an ancestry drawn mainly from the south-west of England and without

Nonconformist proclivities. This distinguished them from the people of other North American British colonies.

A School Society for Newfoundland was formed in 1824, in which Anglicans and Wesleyans at first co-operated; the Missionary Society for a number of years contributed £20 annually to this agency. Like too many institutions of the kind, the above Society was captured and its Schools monopolized by the Episcopalians, and conflict ensued dividing the Protestant educational forces. At length the legislature established a concordat, unique in the British Empire, under which the Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Methodist Churches managed, through separate Boards of their own appointment, under a General Superintendent of Education, the share of the Public Schools assigned to them severally.<sup>1</sup>

The next decade opened with a crisis of economic distress amounting to famine; the fisheries failed, and blight attacked the potatoes, the only crop then raised on the soil; disease followed in the train of want. But the tide of religious revival swelled; despite the ravages of death, the Methodist membership rose from 1830 to 1832 by more than 50 per cent., in 1833 numbering close upon 2,000. The removal of Richard Knight, who was required in the last-named year for the Chair of the Nova Scotia District, was a heavy and permanent loss to Newfoundland. William Crosscombe had previously been removed after but three years' ministry on the island. Newfoundland had reason to complain that it was robbed of its best Preachers for the advantage of more prosperous Districts. Crosscombe had first appeared in the St. John's pulpit 'a white-haired boy,' when on his way to Nova Scotia as a missionary apprentice. Twelve years later (1824) his landing was eagerly hailed on the same spot. He had served meanwhile in Europe, having returned to England through failure of health in Nova Scotia. From 1825 to 1827 he presided over the Newfoundland District; scarcely any man has inspired more affection amongst all classes of people in the island. At St. John's

popular prejudices gave way, the congregations became larger, the members grew in numbers and in grace; and several causes of financial

<sup>1</sup> The problem of religious education is simplified here by the fact that the three religious bodies named practically cover the whole ground. Out of a population of under 220,000 (census of 1901), the Roman Catholics are estimated at 76,000, the adherents of the Church of England at 73,000, and the Wesleyan Methodists at 61,000.

embarrassment ceased to perplex the office-bearers. The work done by him could not be tabulated in the denominational records. Even Irish Roman Catholics afterwards met Mr. Crosscombe in other colonies with bright face and cheery remembrances of his presence in Newfoundland.

On Crosscombe's removal, John Pickavant entered on his long course of Chairmanship.

John Haigh's ministry was peculiarly blessed in the years 1829 and 1830 at the mother-station, Carbonear, where for some time a large Methodist congregation had yielded a diminutive Society. Sedulous pastoral visitation and cottage prayer-meetings, following up powerful preaching, changed all this. Haigh gathered a circle of converted and intelligent young men, who did lasting work for their generation, amongst them Samuel W. Sprague,<sup>1</sup> who entered the ministry in 1838 (one of the two first Newfoundland candidates), George Apsey, a saintly and popular Local Preacher for more than thirty years, and Philip H. Gosse.

The poverty afflicting Newfoundland in the thirties befell at a time when the Mission House, pressed by the heavy demands of the West Indies, the South Seas, and India, and alarmed by the Warrenite agitation at home, was enforcing increased self-support on the colonial Districts. The advances made in recent years, and the destitute condition of the outlying settlements in Newfoundland north and west of the existing Circuits, constituted an urgent plea for additional help from England; but the Secretaries in London could only reply with a *non possumus*. About 1835 the Romanists commenced an aggressive campaign in the island, importing a number of Mission priests, who made headway in the districts unreached by the Methodists; they reported winning in a single year 500 converts from Protestantism. The English Church realized the crisis, and formed Newfoundland at this epoch into a separate diocese, provided with a capable Bishop, liberally aided from England. At this crucial moment, disabled for advance, Methodism was falling into the rear.

Help came, however, from an unexpected quarter. The Congregationalists and Presbyterians of St. John's, concerned at the condition of the island and the aggressions of Romanism, joined hands with the local Methodists in 1837 to form a

<sup>1</sup> He was the father of Howard Sprague, D.D., well known in the ministry of the next generation.



'Home Missionary Fund'—some of these outsiders were already subscribers to the Wesleyan Missionary Society. Having no Missions of their own, they offered to assist their neighbours, and through the funds they supplied our staff was strengthened in 1839 by the addition of two recruits from England, sent to be employed as 'Visiting Missionaries' in the neglected parts of the island. Pickavant, the Chairman, meeting Dr. Alder, of the London Mission House, in Nova Scotia on his Centenary tour (1839), made arrangements with him with a view to effecting an adequate reinforcement of the Newfoundland staff. The Home Missionary Union established at St. John's continued for seven or eight years, when it broke down under Pickavant's successor, through difficulties in co-operation which appear to have been largely of our making. But much good was accomplished by the alliance, temporary as it proved.

William Marshall, fresh from England, was sent to form a new Circuit on the southern shore, working westwards from Hermitage Bay. In the course of the first autumn this indefatigable young Missionary visited nearly every harbour and cove as far as Cape Bay, covering a distance of something like 200 miles. He found not a single church or school in existence in the island to the west of that he had started at Hermitage Cove. The people he reported as being Protestants, about 2,500 in number, and, with few exceptions, of English descent. Three years this heroic labourer spent in the wilderness, occupying a cabin-shelter for his home, and sometimes for six months cut off from communication by letter. He left the shore with schools and preaching-places established, and the foundations of a fruitful Mission Circuit laid. But alas, supplies failed once more; the Missionary who succeeded Marshall was withdrawn after a year's further labour; nor could the work so well commenced be resumed until the formation of the Conference of Eastern British America twelve years later.

At Green Bay, on the east shore—a recess of the wide Notre Dame Bay looking north-east beyond Bonavista, where John S. Addy as Visiting Missionary had prepared the way—William Marshall spent his latest strength. On the island of Twillingate in this region, inhabited by 3,000 souls, a Congregational Missionary had laboured with success forty years earlier; but

the station had been deserted and the Church scattered long ago. A few Methodist families had lately migrated to this quarter from Conception Bay ; these supplied a nucleus for the Societies which were quickly gathered around Addy and Marshall on the Notre Dame shores. Amid the joy of harvest, Marshall was confronted by the old anti-Methodist alliance, of mob, magistrate, and clergyman. A singular guardian providence attended the opening of the Methodist chapel at Twillingate, where some of the fiercest enemies of the Gospel were brought under its power. 'Is it possible,' asked one of these on listening to William Marshall as he preached, 'that this is the man I have opposed?' The persecutor brought forth fruit of repentance by presenting the ground for a Methodist parsonage adjoining the chapel. By the year 1845 over a hundred members of Society were credited to the Green Bay Circuit, which became the most flourishing in the District. 'In no section of the colony has the denominational growth been more wonderfully rapid.' Here a great stride in advance was made, in years during which lack of means lamentably checked progress in other directions. In 1846 William Marshall reached the close of his brief but fruitful career ;

'his memory is embalmed in the hearts of an affectionate people, chiefly brought to God through his instrumentality. Excessive labours and privations injured his constitution and hastened his end.'

The triumph of English Liberalism in 1832 was speedily followed by the grant of legislative institutions to the colonies. To Newfoundland this was at the time a doubtful boon. Romanism of a specially ignorant and intolerant character held the allegiance of nearly half the population, and the number and activity of the Popish priests had recently much increased. They seized the opportunity for securing political ascendancy. So violent were the commotions thus excited that in 1841 the constitution (granted in 1833) had to be suspended, remaining in abeyance more or less for eight years. In 1855 responsible Government was bestowed on the colony, and by this time a tolerable political equipoise had been reached. From the beginning Newfoundland politics have turned largely upon questions of Roman Catholic claims. The disturbed

condition of affairs raised in the later thirties new hindrances to evangelical work. Methodist Preachers were assailed with open violence ; isolated Methodist families were continually harassed ; attempts were made to curtail Protestant liberties by political intrigue and the abuse of legal forms. The *Missionary Report* for 1841 complains that

the changes introduced into the constitution and government have invested that portion of the community (the Roman Catholic) with a large measure of political influence, which they have employed as an instrument of annoyance and oppression toward their Protestant fellow subjects and for purposes of sectarian power and aggrandizement.

This passage reveals the obstruction which blocks the path of civil progress in all countries overshadowed by Romanism ; Popish priestcraft knows how to turn free institutions into means of tyranny wherever it commands the popular vote. The appearance in the course of this struggle of the new Puseyite High Churchmanship amongst the Anglican clergy was most inopportune, since it divided the Protestant forces in Newfoundland and betrayed the cause of the Gospel in face of Roman usurpation.

The valiant Richard Williams, who had made his mark earlier in New Brunswick, became Chairman of the Newfoundland District on Pickavant's withdrawal to England in 1844, and was succeeded on his retirement in 1849 by Edmund Botterell, who presided until 1853, when Thomas Angwin—a Cornishman by birth, who had served long and worthily in this laborious Mission—followed him in office, to assist at the formation of the new Conference in 1855. Botterell, a man who 'cared for the Church of God' and ruled in it with dignity and grace, spent but a short time in the District ; previously he had laboured, with conspicuous success, on Prince Edward Island. He left Newfoundland for New Brunswick.

Another cycle of calamities, resembling that of 1830-33, visited this troublous island during the later forties. On June 9, 1846, an awful fire consumed three-fourths of the town of St. John's,<sup>1</sup> leaving 12,000 persons homeless. Three months

<sup>1</sup> Wooden houses were the rule in the colonies in former times, as is still the case in new settlements and forest clearings. When towns sprang up so built fires were inevitable. Again and again, in different parts of the island, our chapels perished in the flames. A second Methodist church was needed at St. John's when this calamity happened ; not till eleven years later could the want be met.



later a hurricane almost completed the destruction of this prosperous place, the centre of the entire trade and government of the colony, and strewn the Newfoundland shores with wreckage. After fire and storm came failure in the fishing, blight on the potato-crop; in their train famine and disease scourged the islanders, the majority of whom lived from hand to mouth. At one time a third of the population depended on Government relief for subsistence. The recurring periods of distress proved that the fisheries of Newfoundland, however prolific in good seasons, supplied an insecure foundation for general well-being. Attention was turned to the land; the interior of the country was explored, and surveys were made revealing unexpected wealth in the soil; roads were built, agriculture encouraged, mines opened; occupations were multiplied, and the curse of poverty and a precarious livelihood was removed. The Methodist Church of the colony, in alliance with those of the neighbouring Districts, ceased to lean upon the mother country. Material development in this case furthered spiritual advance.

The idea of a comprehensive self-supporting Methodist Church of British North America had been entertained in the London Mission House forty years before it became an accomplished fact; it is not unlikely that it originated with Richard Watson. As early as Robert Alder's first official visit to the country in 1832 the suggestion was mooted; and the editor of the *Christian Guardian* of Toronto gave it emphatic encouragement. About this time steamboat communication was started between Canada and the eastern provinces, promising to bring the two regions into closer intercourse. The discontinuance of this attempt discouraged for the present all projects of this nature. The far-seeing Enoch Wood, then labouring in New Brunswick, writes, however, in 1835:

The plan of independence is not new to my mind; it has been plain enough from the Committee's own communications that they have been aiming at this for a long time.

After stating his belief that a limited combination of New Brunswick with the neighbouring missionary Districts would not be advantageous to the former, he adds:

And yet I like the idea of being free mighty well! Some of the Committee's regulations retard rather than advance the work. . . . If it



[viz. a colonial Methodist union] can be adjusted, you may depend upon it our people would be more interested in the work, and we should generally increase.

The peculiar institution of Upper Canadian Methodism, and the want of harmony between the Societies of the two Canadas, stood in the way of any larger scheme at this period. At the same time Newfoundland leaned heavily upon the British Connexion and did not relish the prospect of being left to American care.

At his second visit, in 1839, Dr. Alder submitted proposals for the concentrating of the Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island Districts in a 'Conference' of their own. This scheme was under discussion for some time in the Districts in question, without any definite conclusion being reached; and in 1841 the larger plan of a North American Conference, with triennial sessions, was revived, a definite proposition for 'the consolidation of the whole of our work in British North America,'<sup>1</sup> coming down from the Mission House two years later, which was laid before all the Districts concerned, Newfoundland included, with the request for opinions and suggestions upon it for 'the information and guidance' of the Missionary Committee. The replies received were discouraging; the huge distances and defective communication between the several areas, and their thinly peopled state, presented an insuperable obstacle in the way of ecclesiastical as of political union. The New Brunswick District reported, however, in favour of an administrative union.

The matter remained in abeyance until Dr. Alder once more visited the colonies in 1847, when, after re-establishing the union of Upper Canada with the British Conference, he conferred in July at Sackville with the leading Ministers of the adjoining Districts (covering N.S., N.B., and P.E.I.) upon the question of consolidation. This meeting advised the instituting forthwith of a 'British North American Conference,' to embrace four Districts formed out of the present three. But delays arose in the maturing of this resolution, and the larger design still floated before the mind of the Missionary Secretaries. Hence in 1849 a circular came from Bishopsgate inviting the Chairmen of Districts to express their views

<sup>1</sup> Excluding the Conference of Upper Canada, at that time entirely severed from the British Connexion.

respecting a 'North American Conference, with Federal Conferences, embracing Eastern Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Western Canada,'<sup>1</sup> to be formed with the aim of 'rendering our colonial Missions more independent in action and more entirely self-supporting.' In March of the following year the General Committee in London instructed the Secretaries to sketch a plan for organizing such a Conference. The disruption then going on in British Methodism, and the violent attacks upon the management of the Missionary Society which accompanied it, occasioned the postponement of the whole business; and when its consideration was resumed in 1852-53, Dr. Alder having resigned office in the meantime, it became evident that, for the present at least, the idea of a confederation covering the whole of the colonies must be laid aside, but that the time was ripe for uniting Upper and Lower Canada, and for aggregating the maritime provinces under a separate Conference. The two larger colonial Connexions this created must be left to gravitate towards each other in their own time and way; they finally amalgamated in 1875. This comprehensive but moderate plan recommended itself to the judgement of Dr. Beecham, and its execution rested chiefly in his hands—Jabez Bunting having retired, Beecham was now the Senior Secretary of the Society. The setting up of the little French Conference in 1852 had been a preliminary essay in this kind of constitution-making, and the negotiations for the formation of the Australian Conference were simultaneously proceeding. The weakened condition of Home Methodism made the devolution of missionary work in the colonial fields an imperative necessity.

By the spring of 1855 these affairs were in train for final settlement on both sides of the Atlantic. The District Meetings of the eastern provinces had approved the change, with some demur on the part of Newfoundland, which still remained comparatively poor and struggling. Dr. Beecham landed at Halifax on May 24, 1855. He met the Ministers of the Nova Scotia West, Nova Scotia East (including Prince Edward Island) and New Brunswick Districts, securing their assent to the proposals he brought, and explained the views and plans of the Missionary Society regarding the new order of things to gatherings of laymen as he went along. Time did not permit

<sup>1</sup> Newfoundland was regarded as out of the question at this date.

of his visiting Newfoundland ; but Richard Knight (who had great influence there) and Matthew Richey were sent as deputation on his behalf, and in the name of the mainland Districts, they won over the somewhat dubious islanders.

Arrangements were made for a meeting to constitute the new Conference, which assembled at Halifax on July 17, when the British Delegate had returned from the west. He was accompanied by Enoch Wood and John Ryerson, who bore greetings of the enlarged Canadian Conference to its new-born sister of the east. Newfoundland District sent its representatives ; and the venerable Isaac Whitehouse came to speak for Bermuda. Dr. Beecham took the chair of assembly, as provisionally appointed by the British Conference, and William Temple was chosen the first Secretary. Dr. Matthew Richey, at this period Chairman of Nova Scotia West, was elected co-delegate—an election which made him the acting President on Dr. Beecham's return to England at the close of the Conference. Next year he succeeded to the chief office, which he held until his retirement in 1861. The territory of the Conference was divided into seven, in place of the former four, Districts—those of Halifax, St. John, Charlottetown, Fredericton, Sackville, Annapolis, and Newfoundland—Bermuda was attached to the Halifax District. The new organization was entitled 'The Wesleyan Methodist Connexion, or Church, of Eastern British America.' Its Ministers numbered 79, its Church members 13,136. The financial system of the parent Conference was adopted as far as possible—with Contingent Fund, Children's Fund, Worn-out Ministers' Fund, and Missionary Fund, and with mixed Committees of Ministers and laymen for their management. In short, the new Conference reproduced in miniature the constitution of the old. All provincial acts of Conference were made subject to the approval of the mother Conference ; but this precautionary right of disallowance—which was never enforced, and was, after a few years, surrendered as needless—had to be exercised within a twelvemonth to be valid.

Sailing home immediately on the termination of the colonial Conference, Dr. Beecham reached England in time to present his report on the last day of the British Conference of 1855. This was the crowning moment of a long and most able and useful missionary administration. The physical and mental

strain he had undergone during his American tour, and in the antecedent months of preparation, overtaxed the strength of a man now advanced in years and always a hard toiler—one who scarcely knew what rest and recreation meant. He submitted to take a holiday in the following spring, but it was too late, and John Beecham finished his earthly course on April 22, 1856.



## VI

### THE PLANTING OF METHODISM IN CANADA

French and English in Canada—Loyalist Immigrants from U.S.—The Church of the People—Settlements on the St. Lawrence—The Methodist Nucleus—James McCarty—William Losee—Negotiations with the Methodist Episcopal Church—A great Revival—Developments in the new Century—Nathan Bangs—American Camp Meetings—William Case—Methodism in Quebec—The Conference of Genesee—Strained Relations with the M.E. Church—An Appeal to the British Conference—‘The Canadas’—A separate British District—‘The Revival Conference’—A Protest from Baltimore—Division of Upper from Lower Canada—An unsatisfactory Division.

THROUGH the capture of Quebec in 1759 Canada was wrested from the French, and England became mistress of North America. Her rival had been in occupation for a century and a half ; she had extended a chain of settlements and forts reaching from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the Great Lakes, and laid the foundation of a new France—Catholic and Royalist—across the Atlantic. The country was peopled as well as conquered ; not only soldiers and priests, traders and trappers, but peasant-cultivators and *grands seigneurs*—younger sons and adventurers of the *noblesse*—poured into Canada and took possession of the soil. Nowhere in the world is there to be seen at this day so much of ancient France, in manners and religion, as amongst the sturdy *habitans* of the St. Lawrence valley below Montreal. The French-speaking population in 1773 was estimated at 100,000, when English residents numbered perhaps 400 ; it was not until after the War of Independence that British colonists were attracted to this quarter.

The rebel leaders of New England expected the Canadian-French to join them readily. They had entirely miscalculated. The resentments left in the breast of the Canadians by their subjugation were directed against their colonial rivals of the south rather than the English Government, which had treated them with much consideration. American raids were resisted, and the invaders were repelled with little help from England

When the fortunes of war turned against the British arms, Canada offered an asylum to the refugees who streamed across the borders, enduring manifold hardships as they traversed the wide trackless forests, infested by lurking Indian enemies, which separated the two countries. At the conclusion of the struggle troops of Loyalist exiles, men inured to colonial life and bringing with them a strain of the best British blood, sought homes in Western Canada, while other detachments were domiciled in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. To this war-driven tide of immigrants cast on the banks of the St. Lawrence and the shores of Lake Ontario was added a large contingent of discharged soldiers, British or colonial-born, to whom lands were assigned in the same region. From this material was formed in 1791, by separation from Lower (French) Canada, the province of Upper Canada, containing a population of about 10,000. The new colony offered an open field for the Methodist Gospel, against which the Romanism of Lower Canada stoutly closed its doors. Amongst the original settlers of the New Canada were many scattered Methodists. Like their Loyalist brethren of Nova Scotia, the exiles did not fail to let their light shine in the strange land. These faithful men became the fathers of Canadian Methodism, which was in the first instance an offshoot from the older Societies of New York and Maryland. This American origin determined the course of Methodist Missions in Canada; the circumstances of its birth go to account both for the rapid development of Canadian Methodism in its early stages, and for the internal conflicts through which it had to pass. While in the maritime provinces Wesleyan Methodism was nursed only through its infancy by the Methodist Episcopal Church of the States, in Canada it remained for half a century under this tutelage.

In Upper Canada, as in the United States, Methodism sprang up spontaneously at points remote from each other. It was congenital with the colony, and inwrought into its foundations; to this day the Methodist Church in the province of Ontario, the heart of the Canadian dominion, is the Church of the people. In 1784 the British Government carried out a survey of Upper Canada; lands were allotted to the American refugees and disbanded soldiers as they arrived, and help was afforded to the needy. The banks of the River Niagara below and of the Detroit above Lake Erie, and the western and north-eastern

shores of Lake Ontario, were the first districts thus occupied. The colonists quickly erected their wooden shelters and made clearings in the forests for their cattle and tillage. If the spot first selected did not suit them, they sold the land to new-comers, and sought a better location further inland. Roads were utterly wanting; Indian forest trails supplied the cross-country paths, traversed on horse-back; the thoroughfare of the country was the great waterway which united the British possessions on the continent and linked them to the rest of the Empire. Kingston, situated a short distance below Lake Ontario, was the only settlement in Upper Canada approaching the dimensions of a town. The sudden introduction of thousands of immigrants, accustomed to the conveniences of civilized life, into a country then utterly wild and untilled, involved at the outset distress that bordered for a while on starvation. For the first winter the Government fed many of the settlers as it might an army on campaign, thus preventing what otherwise would have been a shocking catastrophe. Wrestling with the wild forces of nature, the colonists of Upper Canada became a hardy and combative race.

The group of German-Irish families who planted the seeds of Methodism in New York rendered a like service to Canada also. Philip Embury had died in 1773. His widow (afterwards Mrs. Lawrence), with her second husband and her son Samuel, accompanied by Paul and Barbara Heck, shortly before the outbreak of the war made their way northwards from New York State to Montreal.<sup>1</sup> Halting for a few years, they carried on their Methodist testimony, but made little impression in this French and Catholic city. About the year 1780 the party turned their faces westwards, to find a permanent home at Augusta, a village near Prescott, a town which stands on the north bank of the St. Lawrence about half-way between Montreal and Kingston. Here the little company, in more congenial English surroundings, speedily gathered friends. Samuel Embury was appointed class-leader; regular meetings were instituted, and a Methodist Society formed which spread in the neighbourhood and became a centre of religious light. Barbara Heck, always full of good works and wise counsels, was the leading spirit of the Society. She lived till 1804, and

<sup>1</sup> The long cleft formed by the Hudson River and Lake Champlain between New York and Montreal is the natural highway from the Atlantic coast to the mid St. Lawrence. Along this route large bodies of the Loyalists made their escape.



the monument raised to her memory a hundred years later in the burying-ground of the ' Old Blue Church,' by the Methodists of the United States and of Canada conjointly, honours her as the mother of American Methodism.

A second birthplace of Canadian Methodism is found near the Niagara Falls, where in 1786 Major George Neal made his home. This remarkable man, of Irish extraction but American birth, fought on the British side through the Revolutionary War ; after its close he was put in possession of a tract of land west of the Niagara River. A man of God and a zealous Local Preacher, he proved as valiant in the service of the heavenly as he had been in that of his earthly king. Distressed at the lack of religious ordinances amongst his neighbours, he visited their homes and preached Christ wherever he found an open door. His denunciations of prevalent sin brought on him ridicule and violence ; indeed, for a time he went in peril of his life. But his simple and faithful word won earnest hearers ; the sense of religion was awakened ; here and there souls were saved ; and throughout the district the way was prepared by Neal's preaching for later ministrations. One of his more intelligent converts, Christian Warner by name, under his persuasion started a Society-class, shepherding the lambs of Christ and guiding seekers of salvation into the way of faith. Once again the lay Preacher and the lay leader were our Church founders. Major Neal weathered the storm of persecution and came to be universally revered, dying in 1840 at a patriarchal age. For half a century his house was the hospitable centre of Methodism in the Niagara Circuit.

From a third and still more influential centre Methodism radiated in the earliest days of the peopling of Upper Canada. The Bay of Quinte forms the north-eastern recess, enclosed by the Prince Edward peninsula, of Lake Ontario ; from this inlet the town of Kingston, commanding the head-waters of the St Lawrence, is not far distant. Here, at Adolphustown, an American Methodist exhorter named James Lyons settled as schoolmaster in 1788. Moved, like George Neal of Niagara, by the spiritual desolation around him, Lyons felt that he must teach, to old as well as young, what he had learnt of Christ. He gathered small congregations for worship and exhortation by visiting the families of his scholars and their friends, in whose houses he offered to conduct prayer and spoke of the things



concerning the kingdom of God. This humble ministry was blessed ; sinners were turned to the ways of righteousness. Lyons did not, however, take the further step of forming the converts gained into Methodist classes.

The Bay of Quinte schoolmaster found an ally at Kingston in James M'Carty, a zealous Irish-American who had crossed the border in the same year as himself. Brought to God in the States through Whitefield's preaching, M'Carty had not been a Methodist hitherto ; but in his starting to preach in the new country, the Methodists drew together round him—those of Lyons' circle with a few Kingston townsmen and settlers of the neighbourhood—rallying at the sound of the Gospel. M'Carty was a preacher of native talent, animated and pleasing ; he gathered large audiences and arrested public attention. Kingston, however, was a military station and an Anglican parish, full of Loyalist jealousy. No seditious utterance, no political design, could be laid to M'Carty's charge ; that he was a Nonconformist from the rebel States was enough for the patriotic zealots—his unlicensed preaching was in their eyes an affront both to Church and State. A knot of the leading men of Kingston resolved on M'Carty's suppression. They got him first imprisoned as a vagabond ; but he was bailed out by a gentleman named Robert Perry, who took his stand by the Methodists. On the expiry of his bail M'Carty was preaching again, more popular than ever ! Failing to stop his mouth by legal means, his enemies resorted to treachery. They had him seized and secretly conveyed down the river by night, with orders given to the crew to land him on one of the desolate Thousand Islands. His ultimate fate is shrouded in mystery.<sup>1</sup> Though its bold witness was got rid of, the Gospel was not to be silenced ; Robert Perry had warned the persecutors : ' You may kill M'Carty ; but a hundred will rise up at his burial, whom neither you nor your party can kill.' The odium of their crime clung for long to the haters of Methodism in this District. A signal retribution, it is recorded, overtook each of the three

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Webster, in his *History of the M. E. Church in Canada* (Hamilton, 1870), pp. 37, 38, relates that M'Carty on his way to the Thousand Islands persuaded the French boatmen to put him down on the mainland ; that he returned to Kingston and preached again in Robert Perry's house ; that he was re-arrested and banished to Montreal, and thence crossed over to the States intending to make a home for his family there ; that in returning to fetch them from Canada he was set upon in a wood and killed by assassins on the watch for him. This account is given by Webster on the authority of M'Carty's son, and as vouched for by a gentleman who identified the body of the murdered man.

men who had planned the outrage on M'Carty ; one of them made a written confession before he died that he had ' wronged and wickedly injured an innocent man.' James M'Carty is the proto-martyr of Canadian Methodism.

Perry's prediction did not long wait for fulfilment. Instead of an isolated volunteer bearing witness for the Saviour, with ' the Church ' in arms against him, a company of Methodist itinerants appeared on the ground, whose influence penetrated and leavened the colony with an effectiveness which their Anglican despisers could neither resist nor rival.

At this period the Methodist Episcopal Church, under the strenuous leadership of Freeborn Garrettson, was pushing northwards along Lake Champlain towards the Canadian border. William Losee headed the advance in this direction. Garrettson's ministry in Nova Scotia had given him an affection for the British colonists, and he readily commissioned his young helper, who was dissatisfied with the limitations of his American Circuit, ' to range at large in Canada.' Losee, then about twenty-eight years of age, was a powerful missionary, an expert and bold horseman, though crippled by a withered arm ; an ardent evangelist, stern and passionate in his denunciation of sin, and of a singularly arresting style of address ; his passage through the riverside settlements was like a flame of fire.<sup>1</sup> Losee had Canadian connexions and marked British sympathies, which made his coming the more welcome. On his first journey in the winter of 1789-90, crossing the river at St. Regis and travelling to the Bay of Quinte westward, he came into touch with the Palatine Society at Augusta, and with M'Carty's friends at Kingston and Lyons' flock about Adolphustown, uniting these isolated groups. In other spots he lighted upon derelict Methodists from the old country, and rekindled the smouldering convictions of past years. Wherever he moved conversions—in some instances of a highly dramatic character—attended Losee's path. An awe fell upon the people, resembling that which accompanied John the Baptist's preaching in the wilderness.

<sup>1</sup> Such things as these signalized Losee's ministry. In the Matilda township an ignorant and wicked young man, known in his later regenerate years as ' Uncle Joe Brouse,' was mocking while Losee prayed during one of his public services. Seeing Brouse's misconduct, the Preacher stopped, and, lifting up his eyes and hands to heaven, cried : ' Smite him, my God ! My God, smite him ! ' when the sinner dropped ' like a bullock felled by the butcher's axe, and writhed on the floor in agony, until the Lord in mercy set his soul at liberty.'

Losee returned to the New York Conference in the following summer, bringing a petition for the appointment of a regular Missionary to Canada. The bearer of the petition volunteered for the services, and assent was given. After a hazardous journey through the north-west of the New York State, then virgin forest, Losee crossed the St. Lawrence at Kingston, and in February of 1791 found himself once more at Adolphustown. From this date the history of organized Methodism in Canada begins, coincidently with the constitution of Upper Canada as a colonial province. According to William Case, who knew the country intimately, there were but four—at the most six—recognized Ministers of religion at this time in the province, which held 12,000 colonists, chiefly of British descent, scattered over a region of 450 miles in length. There were three Anglican clergymen, one Scottish Presbyterian, and one or two Ministers of Dutch congregations besides. A crying need existed, and ample room, for the Methodist apostolate.

Losee's relatives lived at Adolphustown, on the Bay of Quinte, and here he fixed his head quarters. His first sermon was preached on Sunday, February 20, at Hay Bay, two miles east of his home; on this spot was gathered the first Society-class in Canada, under the direction of a travelling Preacher. Within a fortnight two other classes were formed in the neighbourhood—the ground had been prepared by the labours of James Lyons. Paul Huff, of Hay Bay, and Samuel Detlor of Fredericksburgh, were the leaders of these earliest Societies. The New York Conference of 1791, which Losee was unable to attend, received his report with satisfaction, and raised him to the office of Deacon pending his appearance for ordination. The Circuit he had formed was included in the New York District under the name of 'Kingston.'

The Hay Bay congregation within a few months outgrew its meeting-place in Paul Huff's house, and the erection of a Chapel was resolved upon. The circular announcing the project has been preserved; it is a characteristic Methodist document, and is interesting, as it indicates the twofold allegiance out of which trouble was destined to grow. The letter, dated from 'Adolphustown, February 3, 1792,' runs as follows:

As Almighty God has been pleased to visit us in this wilderness land with the light of a preached Gospel, we think it requisite to build a



meeting-house or church for the more convenient assembling of ourselves together for social worship before the Lord.

We agree to build such church under the direction of William Losee, Methodist Preacher, our brother who has laboured with us this twelve-months past, he following the directions of the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church ; or in his absence under the direction of any Assistant Preacher belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church in Great Britain or America,<sup>1</sup> sent from there by proper authority (such as the Bishop) to labour among us. We do further agree that no other denomination or society or people shall have any privilege or liberty to preach or teach in the said Methodist church without the consent or leave of the Assistant Preacher then labouring with us.

Particulars follow as to the size and location of the building, for which Paul Huff had furnished a site. Twenty-two signatures, each standing for a subscription in money, are appended to the circular ; beside Paul Huff and Widow Roblin (in whose house Losee lodged), we recognize amongst the signatories an *Embury*, nephew to the well-known Philip of that name. The total sum subscribed in this first list of promises was £198 (' in Halifax money '), a large amount for the colony in those days. The Hay Bay Church was the mother sanctuary of Canadian Methodism. Within the same year, at Ernestown, near to Bath, in the same part of the country, Losee succeeded in getting a second chapel built, which proved a thriving home of Methodist life.

Losee attended the New York Conference of 1792, held at Albany, to which he reported a Society membership in the Kingston Circuit of 165, spread over six townships. He pleaded for the appointment of an older colleague to take charge of the Churches formed, while he should seize the new openings that invited him on all sides. An ordained Elder was allocated to the region about the Bay of Quinte, which was designated the Cataraqui Circuit, after the old name of the Kingston fort ; a fresh Circuit, lying eastwards along the St. Lawrence and including Augusta, was carved out for Losee, under the name of Oswegotchie.<sup>2</sup>

The second Canadian itinerant was Darius Dunham, a previous associate of Losee and a no less striking personality.

<sup>1</sup> The founders evidently wish to keep the door open for the appointment of Ministers from the mother country ; but they fail to distinguish the British Conference from the M.E. Church in the States.

<sup>2</sup> These early designations of the Canadian Circuits shortly gave place to other titles. They have a romantic Indian sound.



Like his colleague, Dunham was unsparing in his assaults upon sin; but where the former blazed and thundered, the latter brought into play a shrewd biting humour, which, assisted by a powerful bass voice and a varied eloquence, was most effective.<sup>1</sup> Dunham was empowered to establish Church ordinances and to constitute the Cataraqui Circuit in due form. A Quarterly Meeting was summoned to take place at Ernestown, on Saturday, September the 15th, to which the people flocked from all sides. A love-feast was held on the next day, followed by the administration of the Lord's Supper, the first celebration in that wild region. This was a high festival, the memorable 'beginning of days' for Canadian Methodism. In his new Circuit Losee soon built up a Society round the Palatine nucleus at Augusta; by the close of the year Oswegotchie recorded a membership of 90. The 165 left in Dunham's charge at Cataraqui had grown by an equal increment.

For some reason unknown, the Canada Stations are wanting in the American *Minutes* of 1793. In the following year one grieves to see the name of William Losee disappearing from the itinerant roll; private trouble,<sup>2</sup> aggravated in its effect by the strain of excessive labour, brought about a mental collapse, which compelled the withdrawal to his home in the States of this heroic pioneer. After some time Losee's mind recovered its balance, and he resumed preaching in the local ranks. Many years subsequently he revisited the scenes of his early labours in Canada, where he preached with something of his old fire, but presented the pathetic appearance of a prematurely aged man.

In 1794 the Cataraqui Circuit, which had suffered a temporary decline, changed its name to that of 'Midland,' in view of the

<sup>1</sup> Darius Dunham's sayings became proverbial. An uppish young magistrate met him one day astride a fine horse and rallied him on being so much better mounted than his Master. He replied that he would gladly have ridden in the same humble fashion, only that in this country 'the Government had made all the asses into magistrates!' A young woman, invited to join the Church, and replying: 'I don't care if I do,' he promptly advised: 'You had better wait till you *do* care.' Those who smarted under this Preacher's lash gave him the sobriquet of 'Scolding Dunham.'

<sup>2</sup> Losee's derangement is accounted for by the tragic story told in Playter's *History of Methodism in Canada*, pp. 42, 43. His affections had been drawn to a Methodist maiden, pious, intelligent, and beautiful, living in the Cataraqui Circuit, whom he secretly hoped one day to make his own. His successor, who knew nothing of his colleague's shy aspirations, was attracted in the same direction, and promptly won the lady's hand. The shock of finding himself ousted, unawares, by the very brother whom he had invited on to the scene, was more than Losee's high-strung sensibility could endure. John Carroll, writing in *Case and his Contemporaries*, speaks of Mrs. Dunham, whom he knew, as 'still fascinating at the age of sixty.'

formation of the Niagara Circuit farther west, which Dunham organized in the following year, finding a Church of 65 members already in being there—the fruit of Neal's labours. His old Circuit around Ernestown, recovered from its depression and counting 265 members in its Societies, was known from this date as 'The Bay of Quinte.' James Coleman and Elijah Woolsey were sent from the New York District to carry on Losee's work. These two excellent Missionaries—the former described as grave, simple, loving, and full of unction; the latter 'a bland, lively young man,' thoroughly active and useful—were both recalled in a few years across the border. For the present Coleman remained on the Oswegotchie (or 'lower') Circuit, which steadily grew in strength; Woolsey, at the Bay of Quinte, was assisted by Sylvanus Keeler, the fifth Preacher enlisted for Canada, and the first to be called out on Canadian ground. Keeler was an uneducated man, but his advantages of natural talent, presence, voice, and manners, turned to full account by 'a boundless zeal,' made him a valuable Minister. He had a wife, and a family of small children; it was their claims, and no incompetency for the work, that compelled his retirement after a year's service<sup>1</sup>; he resumed his ministry in 1799, to suffer and toil greatly as a frontier missionary and to see 'much people added to the Lord.' The other Preachers were placed under the direction of Darius Dunham, whom we find in 1796 designated 'Presiding Elder,' after the usage of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Local Preachers were raised up, especially in the Bay of Quinte Circuit, some of these fully equal in gifts to their itinerant brethren, but whose age or circumstances forbade their 'travelling.'

The vacant places of Woolsey and Keeler were filled in 1796 by two men, each of them destined to leave a deep mark on the Canadian Church. These were Hezekiah Calvin Wooster and Samuel Coate, who were Deacons recently ordained in the States. The new Preachers met Dunham at the Bay of Quinte Quarterly Meeting, over which he had come to preside, and assisted him in its exercises. On the Saturday evening

<sup>1</sup> Keeler left his family behind, it appears, at his original home of Elizabethtown, in the Lower Circuit, when stationed in other places. During his absences they were sometimes put to sore shifts for subsistence. In after years his children told with emotion how they 'mounted the fence and strained their eyes to catch the first glimpse of their returning father for hours, and even days, before his appearance,' when his periodical visits were due.

Dunham and Coate were engaged with the officers of the Circuit transacting its business, while Wooster lingered in conversation with a group of persons remaining behind under the influence of the public service just concluded. The Spirit of God came down on the little company; some broke into loud praises; others were stretched speechless on the floor. Elder Dunham entered the room unprepared for the scene. Suspecting some hysterical manifestation, he fell on his knees in the midst of the circle and prayed aloud that the Lord would stop 'the raging of this wild fire.' Forthwith Wooster kneeled beside his chief, whispering gently and repeatedly, 'Lord, bless brother Dunham!' For some moments the two pleaded against each other, until the strange influence possessing the company seized upon the elder Minister, and he shared the experience he had so passionately deprecated. From this hour the colleagues were one in heart; a mighty revival swept through the province, resulting in the addition before the next Conference of more than 60 per cent. to the Church membership in Canada. The movement was marked by 'depth and comprehensiveness.' Holiness in the full measure of its claims and possibilities was preached, along with repentance and faith. The storm of abuse and violence which now burst on Methodism served like an adverse wind to fan the flame. The ministry of this period set the standard and fixed the character of Methodist preaching for Canada. Wooster was constitutionally delicate; arduous toil and the nervous tension of the revival developed in him the germs of disease. He fell into a rapid consumption, but continued to preach with his latest breath. During the last month spent in Canada he spoke through an interpreter, who, catching his faintly voiced sentences, repeated them to listening crowds with such effect that on all sides 'men fell as if shot in the field of battle.' His appearance 'was like that of a being from the eternal world, rather than of a fellow mortal.' Utterly spent in body but in ecstasy of soul, he was carried to his father's house to die, and passed away on November 6, 1798.

Wooster's companion on the journey to the Bay of Quinte, Samuel Coate, fascinated the plain farming folk of Canada in another way. He was a cultivated orator—graceful, discursive, instructive, and subduing in appeal, courtly, moreover, in



manners, and studious of his dress and appearance—an uncommon thing in that rough country. He and his wife (a niece of Philip Embury), who matched him well, were known as 'the Handsome Pair' throughout the colony. No such eloquence as that of Coate had been heard from any English tongue in Canada; 'he swept like a meteor over the land, and spellbound the wondering new settlers. Nor was it astonishment alone that the Preacher excited; he was the heaven-anointed instrument of the conversion of hundreds. His success, in the early part of his career, resembled that of Whitefield'; so writes Carroll. Coate's first period of labour in Upper Canada extended to the year 1800. Dunham, Wooster, and Coate, working in unity of spirit, formed a trio of unique and almost irresistible power; the misfortune was that the combination proved so short-lived.

At the American Conference of 1799, when the Canadian membership stood at 866, Darius Dunham laid down the government; in the following year he ceased to 'travel,' returning to his former profession of medicine. Family cares enforced these steps. During the early years of the American itinerancy most married Preachers found themselves obliged to locate on reaching middle life. Settling on the Bay of Quinte Dunham rendered long and much-valued service in the local pulpits. Joseph Jewell, of the American itinerancy, succeeded to the Presiding Eldership, and ruled the District until 1803, when he returned to the States. Without the pungent wit of his predecessor, Jewell, says Carroll, 'was remembered in Canada' as 'a gifted, laborious, bachelor Presiding Elder, who travelled the country from end to end,<sup>1</sup> preaching, praying, visiting, singing, and delightfully talking of the things of God.' The man matched his name.

The opening of the new century saw the work in Upper Canada extended by the employment of seven itinerants instead of the previous four, and the mapping out of a fresh Circuit formed amongst the immigrants, chiefly American, who were pushing up the Ottawa River behind Montreal. This Mission, an outgrowth of the Oswegotchie Circuit, appears in

<sup>1</sup> The Presiding Elder, under the constitution of the M.E. Church, was not tied to any Circuit, but itinerated through the whole District, holding the Quarterly Meetings in each Circuit, which were much more than administrative and business assemblies, and supervising the entire range of the work. The P.E. was, on a smaller scale, what the Bishop of the Church was on a larger scale; he had to be always 'on the wing.'



the *Minutes* of 1800 under the name 'Grand River'—a title soon exchanged for 'Ottawa'; it trenched upon the Lower District. Sylvanus Keeler now resumed his 'travelling.' Joseph Sawyer, a native of New York and a man of solid character, incisive speech, and ardent zeal, who for a while acted as Presiding Elder, joined the Canadian staff at this time, and was stationed at Niagara. Later, on an expedition down the St. Lawrence, Sawyer started the first regular Society in Montreal.

By this date the District reported 996 Church members, and its work was progressing in all directions. Sanctuaries were found in farmers' kitchens and barns, sometimes in schoolrooms or court-houses; in summer the people met beneath the trees in the forest-clearings—rarely was the Methodist Preacher refused a preaching-place and a night's lodging. Wherever he was personally known or his calling recognized, messengers were speedily sent out far and wide to invite the neighbours to worship. About this time the third Methodist church was built in Upper Canada, on the Niagara Circuit, known as 'Warner's Meeting-house,' after the name of the hospitable Christian Warner, whose dwelling had become too strait for the Methodist gatherings. Under Sawyer's ministry the Niagara region experienced a powerful and salutary revival.

Next year the missionary staff was raised to ten, stationed in five huge Circuits. John Robinson (or Robertson) entered the Canadian service, coming from the south. A man of superior gifts and prepossessing style, in the prime of his activity, he succeeded Jewell as Presiding Elder in 1803. But in a few months he married, and abandoned his work, leaving his District without an overseer, on the plea of his wife's illness. Like Dunham, Robinson remained in service as a Local Preacher; the 'located,' but not superannuated, Ministers rendered important service in American Methodism at this period, administering the Sacraments as well as preaching, though without the pastoral authority of the itinerants; not unfrequently through their personal influence they were the backbone of the Circuits where they resided. Robinson's companion, Seth Crowell—known as 'little Crowell'—is commemorated as 'a young Preacher of great zeal and indomitable industry.' Canada enjoyed his ministry for but three years.

In his case, as with others, the frontier work proved physically exhausting.

Three of the vacancies arising in 1802 were filled by men of remarkable quality and strength. Peter Vannest—born in the States, but converted at Bristol (England), where he came under the influence of Primitive Methodism—was a man of sturdy, downright character, fond of recalling his brethren to the image of Wesley, whom ‘his eyes had seen and his hands handled.’ He also, after battling with the Canadian winters, had to turn his face southwards again. In the States he laboured long, to be revered for his stern maintenance of the old paths, as ‘Father Vannest.’ Thomas Madden bore with steadfastness the toils of the colonial itinerancy—always useful, always reliable, though never brilliant. Nathan Bangs was the ‘bright, particular star’ of the native-bred ministry—a man of keen intelligence, versatile ability, and genial address. Converted under Coleman’s influence, this clever young teacher and surveyor was set to preach by John Sawyer; for ten years he ‘travelled’ in the province with the greatest acceptance and success.<sup>1</sup> The circumstances of his transference to the United States, where he won (as Dr. Bangs) a position of the highest eminence in his Church, will appear on a subsequent page.

Dr. Abel Stevens, in his *History of the M.E. Church*, portraying this famous man in the days of his youthful ministry, vividly depicts the conditions of the early itinerant work in Canada:

Moral restraints among a primitive community are feeble, conventional restraints few. The freedom of the wilderness life characterizes all their habits. . . . They are frank, hospitable, but violent in prejudice and passion, fond of disputations, of excitement, and of hearty if reckless amusements. The primitive Methodist Preachers knew well how to accommodate themselves to the habits, and to the fare, of such people; hence their extraordinary success along the whole American frontier. Their simple and familiar methods of worship . . . suited the rude settlers. Their meetings were without the order and cere-

<sup>1</sup> Bangs was apparently the earliest Methodist Preacher to address the Canadian Indians. In the neighbourhood of York (Toronto) on New Year’s Eve (1802–3) he happened to witness a Native dance near his lodging. When the merriment was over, he obtained leave to preach to the company, his trader-host interpreting. He told the story of Jesus with such effect that the Indian chief threw his arms about the Preacher’s neck and begged him to come and live with his people and be their instructor. The simple affection of the red men touched Bangs’ heart, and made him a life-long advocate of Indian Missions.

monious formality of other communities. They were often scenes of free debate, of interpellations and interruptions. . . . Their popular freedom allowed great plainness of speech and directness of appeal. Our itinerant (N. B.) had a natural tact and a certain authoritative presence, an air of command qualified by a concessive temper, which seldom failed to control the roughest spirits.

As the Oswegotchie Circuit had given birth to that of Ottawa on the north-east, so the Circuits of Niagara and the Bay of Quinte extended themselves to the west. The new division of the former, bordering on Lake Erie, bore the name of 'Long Point'; the outgrowth of the latter was first known as 'the Home District'—it included the rising township of York, which in course of time became the great city of Toronto.<sup>1</sup> About this time the Bay of Quinte Circuit received a visit from the eccentric missionary Lorenzo Dow, whose preaching recalled that of Calvin Wooster and made a lasting impression upon the people.

Samuel Coate was restored to Canada by the American Conference of 1804, to take up the Eldership vacated by Robinson. The missionary staff was still limited to ten, although two new Stations had been occupied. Nathan Bangs was sent far west to open a Circuit along the banks of the Thames River, where the rich valley-land was drawing numerous settlers. He found a Methodist family who had not heard a sermon for seven years, and children growing up unacquainted with the forms of worship and the most elementary facts of religion. He wrote :

Though the people generally were extremely ignorant of spiritual things and very loose in their morals, they seemed ripe for the Gospel, and hence received and treated God's messenger with great attention and kindness.

His description of his first visit to a backwoods hamlet may serve for a sample of the course pursued by the pioneer itinerants. Drawing rein on Saturday afternoon at the first house reached, and seeing a man in the yard, the rider hailed him and said :

I have come a great distance for the purpose of preaching the Gospel to you. To-morrow is the Sabbath, and I must have a house to preach in before I get off my horse.

<sup>1</sup> Toronto was the original Indian name of the spot, borne by the French fort planted there. In 1794 the English Governor fixed here the capital of the colony, naming it *York*, but in the end the old name was resumed.

After looking him over and making some further parley, the farmer bade him dismount, offering food and lodging for man and beast ; a messenger was sent down the river to invite all within reach for the preaching on Sunday morning. At the hour named the farmhouse was filled. Bangs introduced himself, stated his credentials and his motives in coming. He described the manner and order of Methodist worship. 'As many of you as see fit to join me,' he said, 'can do so ; but if not, you can choose your own method.' Every person present joined heartily in the service ; and at the conclusion, when the Preacher had explained the Methodist plan of itinerating and of supporting the ministry, the invitation he received to include the village on his round was unanimous. In the like fashion he was generally welcomed, and extended his Circuit along the river to Lake St. Clair and the shores of Lake Erie. An old Baptist exhorter, however, lived in the neighbourhood, who was provoked by Bangs' success, and induced some of the people to close their doors against him ; at the same time the young Preacher caught the malaria rife in the district, which so disabled him that he was obliged to move. Not till five years later could the Circuit be taken up again ; by this time the Baptist opposition had died down. In 1805 the immense 'Home District,' which stretched westwards from the Bay of Quinte along the whole north of Lake Ontario, was divided into Yonge Street<sup>1</sup> and Smith's Creek Circuits (west and east)—names which long figured in the Upper Canadian Stations.

The year 1805 is memorable for the introduction into Canada of the American camp-meeting—an institution suited to the conditions and habits of Western life, which played a great part in Methodist advance on both sides of the border. The innovation came in with the advent from the States of two young Preachers of contrasted but equally remarkable powers, whose history was strangely intertwined—these were Henry Ryan and William Case. Ryan, the elder of the two, was an Irishman of powerful build and considerable mental ability, united with indefatigable energy and boundless self-reliance. The combative nature of such a man (a famous pugilist in his unregenerate days) found abundant scope in the encounters of a frontier Preacher's life. Peril and hardship he took joyfully ; opposition

<sup>1</sup> Yonge Street was a military road, thirty-six miles in length, at that time unique in the colony, running due north from York to Lake Simcoe.



gave zest to his labours.<sup>1</sup> Ryan inevitably won a leader's place amongst Canadian Methodists, and became a popular hero. An early colleague writes of him :

He was in that day a very pious man, with great love for the cause of Christ and great zeal for his work as a Minister. He laboured as if the judgement-thunders were to follow each sermon. He was sometimes overbearing in his administration of discipline ; but with this exception he performed his duties in every part of his work as faithfully as any man I ever knew.

It is the more necessary to give Ryan credit for the singular services he rendered to religion in Canada in his best days, because his later course was marred by rash contention with his brethren.

William Case, who was American-born, differed from his companion in almost every quality but that of devotion to the common Master. Slight in build and with a refined appearance, Case had nevertheless uncommon powers of endurance. His temper was pleasant, his voice musical and winning, his manners graceful, his tact unerring ; he disarmed opposition, where Ryan would beat it down. Case's humility and gentleness were proverbial. Without superior intellectual force or gifts of oratory, his preaching melted the hearts of men and his pastoral skill was exquisite. His long ministry, with brief intervals spent in the States during its early period, was devoted to Canadian Methodism, of which he became in old age the beloved patriarch. William Case was the chief founder of the Canadian Missions to the Indian tribes.

For many years the principal movements of Methodism in Canada revolved round these two men. Their colleagueship in their first appointment on the Bay of Quinte Circuit was conspicuously owned of God. The camp-meeting they held on Paul Huff's ground was the beginning of a revival which ran

<sup>1</sup> Many stories were told of Henry Ryan's feats of muscular strength. Occasionally rowdies attempted to break up the Methodist camp-meetings, and this giant is said more than once to have lifted a disturber by the waist and pitched him clean over the fence. One day, as he was preaching, the village bully, a hulking blacksmith, entered the middle of the service and hustled his way noisily to the front. Ryan eyed the fellow steadily, then paused, rolled up his sleeve, and reaching out his clenched fist said in stentorian tones : ' My man, God Almighty did not give me this right arm for nothing, and if you come any further, I won't promise that you'll not be hurt ! ' The ruffian instantly subsided. His voice had tones like a lion's roar—one of the most resounding ever heard. Meeting in a public place a man who poured on him a torrent of profanity, Ryan thus took him at his word : ' Swear away, my man ! You have as good a right to be damned as any one I know of. Go on, and you will accomplish your purpose.'

through the colony. The gathering was free from the disturbances which were apt to attend these occasions in later years. 'The people,' says Playter, 'were yet in their happy simplicity, and had not learned how to be mischievous.' In 1804 the first Preacher was appointed by Bishop Asbury to Montreal in the person of young Martin Ruter, who, returning after a year of lonely service to the States, subsequently attained (as Dr. Ruter) distinction in the Methodist Episcopal Church. Two years later the Methodist interest in Montreal had grown to such importance that Samuel Coate was removed thither, Lower Canada being formed under his Eldership into a separate District, including Quebec and Ottawa. Nathan Bangs was stationed in the former Circuit; in Ottawa Andrew Prindle, a man of Canadian breeding, without polish or schooling, but possessing a naturally clear and strong understanding and a practical knowledge of the things of God. The French-speaking William Snyder was instructed to mission the *habitans* along the Lower Ottawa; but the priests effectually deterred the people from listening to the Methodist Preacher, and Snyder's attempt was abandoned.

Quebec now comes definitely into the scope of our history. From 1780-84 a Methodist commissariat officer of the name of Tuffey, attached to the British force in this city, preached with notable success; but means were wanting to follow up his work. It bore fruit, however, in the conversion of a number of soldiers, afterwards settled in different parts of the colony, who were found ready to support the Methodist Preacher when he appeared. In 1799 Lorenzo Dow—a man who 'loved to do good, but whose way of doing it was like the course of the comets'—spent five days in Quebec awaiting a vessel bound for his native Ireland. Finding here on inquiry a few lapsed Methodists, he gathered these about him, and gained during his brief sojourn a large congregation; he 'had reason to believe that at least twenty persons were stirred up to seek after God.' No permanent Society, however, was formed, and when Nathan Bangs arrived in Quebec he had to begin from the foundations. Amongst the Protestant population the Established Churches of England and Scotland both had a footing, and alike 'manifested,' reports Bangs, 'a deadly opposition to Methodism.' He found 'a few who received him cordially, though with much timidity.' With the greatest

effort and difficulty Bangs gained a footing in Quebec,<sup>1</sup> which Samuel Coate, who, coming from Montreal, exchanged places with him, by dint of eloquence and charm was able to make good. Amongst the few who rallied around Bangs and Coate was Jacob Heck, the second son of Barbara, and Peter Langlois, recently arrived from the Channel Islands; the latter became trustee, class-leader, and local preacher in two languages, and served Christ and the Church with constancy till his death sixty years later.

Lorenzo Dow had come down to Quebec from the south-western country, where, under commission from Bishop Asbury, he had laboured on the borders of Vermont State, in and around the Canadian townships of Sutton and Dunham. He broke ground successfully in this neglected region, but in his restless fashion departed after three months. An opening, however, was thus made for a fresh Circuit, which Peter Vannest, appointed in 1800, turned to good account. This Mission, known later as Stanstead Circuit, stretched on both sides of the boundary; its people were chiefly American. This Circuit, soon divided into two, was at first attached to the neighbouring District of the States, but gravitated towards Canada.

The enterprising Joseph Sawyer had taken over Coate's charge in the Presiding Eldership of the older District, which retained, on its reduced area, ten Preachers; for these more than sufficient employment was found. The Oswegotchie Circuit was divided a second time, giving birth to the 'St. Lawrence' Circuit, which embraced the settlements fringing the south bank of the great river within the New York State. Troublesome as it was for the Canadian Presiding Elder to superintend this area from across the St. Lawrence, the breadth of forest which then separated it from the other inhabited parts of the American States formed a more formidable barrier. Two valuable men were in 1806 received on trial for the Canadian ministry, viz. Thomas Whitehead, who had served a good apprenticeship under William Black in Nova Scotia and who lived to be the 'father' of the Canadian

<sup>1</sup> 'The weekly collection' at Quebec in those first weeks, wrote Bangs, 'amounted to about one dollar, and this was all I had to depend upon, after spending all my own money. But behold the goodness of God! When He had sufficiently humbled me to depend upon Himself, He sent me help. . . . A servant would arrive, with the kind respects of unknown persons, with valuable presents of food, sugar, or tea, and sometimes money, and these from strangers with whom I never became acquainted.'



Conference, and Andrew Prindle—a name already noted—the earliest Canadian-born itinerant.

The Conference of 1807 set Coate free to make a begging-tour through the States and England on behalf of the urgently required new chapel in contemplation at Montreal. The expedition was successful in its object, but proved disastrous for the emissary. From this point began the deterioration in Samuel Coate's character, which issued in his withdrawal (in 1810) from the ministry, his subsequent failure in business, and his sinking lower and lower into unworthy habits. He spent his last days in England hawking about specimens of his fine penmanship for a livelihood ; and died, in a condition of pitiable want, but with a penitent hope of God's mercy. ' The closing years of Samuel Coate's life afford a solemn warning to all Ministers to whom God has given the talents which raise the admiration of the multitude.' Bangs remained in Lower Canada on account of Coate's dispensation to travel abroad ; at the next Conference he was removed to the States, and his Canadian career closed. The Conference of 1807 saw the Church membership of the two Canada Districts raised to the number of 2,375, by an increase of 290 upon the year. Case was now at this date transferred by Bishop Asbury to a difficult post in the New York State, but was restored to the colony in exchange for Bangs.

At this period, while the Great War raged in Europe, the colonies were peaceful and thriving. The tide of immigration rose ; settlements were pushed into the backwoods along the tributary streams of the St. Lawrence basin, land being now taken up in what was known as ' the second tier ' of townships. The Government was adapting itself by gradual steps to the needs of the country. Slavery had been excluded by law from Upper Canada at its foundation, and was abolished for Lower Canada in 1803. Local newspapers began to be printed, in English and in French. Meanwhile Methodism was spreading through all the English settlements, older and newer alike, supplying the lack of service of other Churches. In the Stations of 1808 the Upper District contains nine Circuits, extending from Cornwall,<sup>1</sup> not far above Montreal, to Long Point, on the middle northern shore of Lake Erie, and in the

<sup>1</sup> ' Oswegotchie ' now disappears from the Canadian Stations. Cornwall becomes the centre of the eastern and Augusta of the western part of Losee's old Circuits so designated.



Ancaster Circuit sending out an arm, round the western bend of Lake Ontario toward Niagara. The Lower District, where Romanism allowed small scope for Methodism, was confined to the three Stations of Quebec, Montreal, and Ottawa. The Circuits of Dunham and Stanstead were still associated with American Districts across the border. By this date an organized Society had come into existence at Quebec; in no other colonial centre has Methodist preaching continued so long with such slight achievement. The English residents here—beside the military, chiefly traders and lumbermen—were few and migratory; the Preacher's success could not be measured by the Church membership embodied on the spot. A staff of four was assigned to the eastern, and thirteen to the western District, not counting the two Ministers of Dunham and Stanstead. All were itinerants in the most liberal sense, constantly enlarging their rounds and annexing new settlements as they were formed.

In 1809 the Canadian Districts 'lengthened their cords' both eastwards and westwards. Joseph Sansom, of French-Canadian stock and a bilingual Preacher, was posted at Three Rivers, an old settlement midway between Quebec and Montreal, to which the increase of river-traffic and the discovery of ironstone in the neighbourhood had given importance. For some years the work in this Circuit progressed but slowly. Bangs' earlier labours in the far west were resumed by the appointment of William Case to Detroit, a town on the American side of the channel between Lakes Huron and Erie, which supplied a centre for the country now opening up on the Canadian frontier toward Lake Huron. In his round of 240 miles, ranging on both sides the border, the Missionary met with wonderful success, amongst a people 'the most wicked and dissipated,' he writes, of any in America<sup>1</sup>; 'the Gospel spread like fire through dry stubble.' Case's letter of report to Bishop Asbury reveals the spirit animating the Canadian ministry:

Often I could have given up my life for Jesus' sake and the salvation of precious souls. Sometimes when I have rode twenty miles and

<sup>1</sup> Case's life was often in peril; he speaks of magistrates forbidding householders, on pain of a heavy fine, to allow Methodist worship on their premises, and describes a 'rough fellow' appearing 'in the meeting with a rope, declaring he would hang me if I did not preach to suit him!' Detroit was occupied by American soldiers discharged after the War of Independence, and by Indian half-breeds.

preached twice or three times, I have felt but little weariness ; and often was so happy in my Saviour's love that I wanted neither to eat nor sleep. . . . I could not hold my peace, but glorified God aloud that I was counted worthy to suffer in the cause of my heavenly Master.

The advance of Methodism in Upper Canada and the western backwoods of New York State led in 1810 to the separation from the overgrown New York Conference of its north-western section under the name of the Conference of Genesee, to which a Church membership of something over 10,000 was assigned. Lower Canada remained under the old Conference. The two colonial Districts in this way were parted for a couple of years. In the Lower District a Circuit was marked out along the St. Francis River, which flows into the St. Lawrence some distance above the town of Three Rivers on the southern side. The St. Francis drains a long fertile valley into which English settlers were finding their way, and the new enterprise was full of promise. The Circuit thus formed linked up the outlying Stations of Stanstead and Dunham to Canadian Methodism. Coate and Sawyer now retired from the leadership of the two Districts, the latter finding himself compelled for domestic reasons to locate. Sansom was promoted to the Presiding Eldership in Lower and Ryan in Upper Canada. Ryan was accustomed to ride in the course of his visitations, along the rough roads and forest trails then in use, 4,000 miles each year ; his annual stipend as Presiding Elder, including all allowances, amounted to £60 ! The St. Lawrence Circuit was at this date transferred to the adjoining District in the States.

Although Canadian Methodism had been initiated, and directed for twenty years, by the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Bishops had been unable hitherto to visit this outlying and distant region. At last, in the summer of 1811, Asbury found a fortnight to spare for Canada, between the sessions of the New York and Genesee Conferences, thus fulfilling a long-cherished desire. The great leader was now old and spent, having toiled with unparalleled exertions for forty years in the making of American Methodism ; he suffered much from the hardships of his rapid journey. The limitations of time allowed him to visit only the central and older Canadian Circuits. His apostolic presence and counsels were received with affectionate reverence ; they gave a new consecration to

the Churches through which he passed. Asbury writes of the Canadian region that he traversed :

Our ride has brought us through one of the finest countries I have ever seen. . . . Surely this is a land that God the Lord hath blessed.

Of the people he says, ' My soul is much united to them.' Five years later this noble man of God went to his rest.

The visitation took place at a critical hour. Mutterings were already heard of the storm of war which burst in the next year, and involved Canada in bloodshed and devastation, leaving in its train a deep resentment toward the Republic of the south. Engaged in the last desperate throes of the struggle with Napoleon, Great Britain could ill afford to combat a new enemy. Ostensibly the cause of the quarrel was the enforcement by the British Navy of ' the right of search ' on ships sailing under a neutral flag ; but in Canada the conflict was understood to be a war of conquest, with the annexation of the St. Lawrence valley for its aim. English and French-Canadians alike were roused to vehement resistance. The children of the United Empire Loyalists flew to arms ; they felt themselves to be at once vindicating their own liberties and avenging their fathers' wrongs. The population of Lower Canada at this date was about 220,000 ; that of Upper Canada, 80,000. The military attacks made by the forces of the States—in their conduct little better than destructive raids—were defeated by the colonial militia led by British officers, with the aid of but small bodies of British troops. On the other side, the war was a half-hearted business of which the best Americans confessed themselves ashamed ; the New England States held aloof from it. While it checked the progress of the colonies, it consolidated Canadian citizenship and accentuated loyal feeling toward the mother country.

From this time the relations of colonial Methodism to the Church across the border became strained and difficult ; but for the war it is possible that the Methodists of Canada would to this day have remained in the Methodist Episcopal fold. Amongst the border population, connected by business and social intercourse and numerous family ties, there was no desire for hostilities on either side. In some instances distressing collisions occurred, men of near kindred or of old friendship finding themselves in opposite ranks seeking each other's life.



The Methodists maintained fellowship across the frontier; the Dunham Circuit, which lay astride the border, held its Quarterly Meeting in a warehouse built for the convenience of smugglers with the boundary-line passing through it; here the love-feast took place in a scene of strange emotion, Americans and Canadians telling their experience, singing hymns, and shaking hands over the barrier without transgressing it.<sup>1</sup> William Case, whom Bishop Asbury sent across the border to preside over a District in the States,<sup>2</sup> exerted himself in caring for the Canadian and British prisoners, amongst whom were a large number of Methodists. The Canadian Preachers held a Conference of their own during the war, making a first essay of independence. Lower Canada was in 1812 transferred from the jurisdiction of New York to that of the Genesee Conference, being thus ecclesiastically reunited to the Upper Province.

In Upper Canada Henry Ryan presided during this agitating period with energy and judgement.

By his loyalty he gained the confidence and admiration of all friends of Britain; and by his abundant and heroic labours the affection of the God-fearing portion of the community.

He exhibited at this period a gentleness and consideration unlooked for in a man of his temperament. The work of the District in the west suffered little interruption. Several itinerants were compelled to locate, but continued to preach diligently, while those who had settled earlier, along with Major Neal and other lay Preachers, contributed effective assistance. Fresh recruits were pressed into service. Amongst these were Ezra Adams,<sup>3</sup> who, with intervals of location and

<sup>1</sup> Amongst other curious incidents occurring on the border was the case of an American Preacher continuing, by permission, his rounds in the Canadian part of Dunham Circuit, who happened to have a controversy with a Baptist debater. Replying to the assertion that no man once a Christian believer would be allowed to die in sin, the Methodist incautiously exclaimed: 'Give me an army of 5,000 *backslidden Christians* who could be kept from praying and I could conquer the world, for no bullet could touch them!' The crafty Baptists forthwith reported to the British commanding officer that Mr. Ross (the Methodist) had boasted to his congregation that 'with 5,000 troops he could conquer all Canada!' The Commander promptly ordered the Preacher to clear out!

<sup>2</sup> Case was not restored to Canada till 1815.

<sup>3</sup> Ezra Adams' pastorate was peculiarly blessed to the weaklings of the flock—'the feeble, halting, jealous-minded, easily offended, and delinquent.' He was a man super-sensitive to his own infirmities; he grieved sorely because, when the question arose in his mind as he was nigh perishing from cold on a journey: 'Are you willing to die here and now?' his heart replied, 'No; I would rather go into the house and die by the fire!'



superannuation, held a place in the ministry for nearly sixty years; and Thomas Harmon, a soldier on the British side, whose testimony took great effect upon his comrades—they told of him that ‘he prayed like a saint and fought like a devil!’ He performed ‘prodigies of valour,’ and helped conspicuously to win the battle of Queenston, in which the British Commander, General Brock, fell.

The Lower District, with its slender resources, was affected very seriously by the war, which gave to its history a new turn. Nathan Bangs had been appointed its Presiding Elder in place of Joseph Sansom, but the outbreak of hostilities prevented his crossing from the States; he never returned to the Canadian ministry. Two others of Asbury’s appointees were detained on the American side.<sup>1</sup> Thomas Burch, being a British subject, was allowed to occupy his station at Quebec; in addition he took charge of Montreal in default of Bangs, and made the latter place his head quarters. Of Hibernian birth, and converted in early youth under Gideon Ouseley’s ministry, Burch had earned a good degree amongst the American Methodists; he bravely held his post through the war. At Quebec the faithful Peter Langlois, aided for some time by a British military paymaster of the name of Webster, filled the pulpit on Burch’s removal to Montreal. The one colleague left to Burch in the District was Robert Hibbard, stationed at Ottawa, who during the two preceding years had formed the St. Francis Circuit, where he proved himself a successful pioneer and organizer, and was endeared to the people. His designated successor from the States failing to reach St. Francis, Hibbard came down from Ottawa to visit his deserted friends; and was drowned on October 12 in crossing the St. Lawrence to reach them. The death of this young man was a lamentable blow to the crippled District. Thus out of five Missionaries appointed to Lower Canada one only remained on the ground. Ryan, to whose charge the Lower District was provisionally attached, on Bangs’ failure to arrive, had no means of filling the vacancies. Toward the end of the war he sent a Preacher to assist Burch at Montreal. The border Dunham-Stanstead Circuits were deprived of one out of their three Ministers; and William Ross, ‘a precious man of God,’ was banished

<sup>1</sup> The term ‘American’ was appropriated by the people of the United States, who thus distinguished themselves from the Canadian ‘Britishers.’ It is convenient to follow this usage.

from Canadian territory under the circumstances already related. The Methodists of Lower Canada were all but derelict.

Under these circumstances they turned for help to the other country, whose Missionaries were now occupying in some force the colonies farther east. Three months before the war commenced an appeal for a Minister from England had been privately addressed to members of the British Conference, signed by leaders and Trustees of the Montreal Society, which set forth at length and with unusual frankness the dissatisfaction felt with the American Preachers. The signatories pledged themselves to the maintenance of the Missionary who should be sent them. They complain that the Canadians are regarded as 'strangers and foreigners' and their land as 'a miserable country under a despotic government,' for which the American Preachers cannot conceal their contempt; and that the supply of itinerants from the States is irregular and subject to great delays, the man appointed, when he comes at last, presenting 'a long account of his travels, a long string of expenses, and a long face!'<sup>1</sup> They find themselves as British subjects involved in odium and discredit through their attachment to 'a foreign ecclesiastical system.'

We are stigmatized [they say] as a set of Jacobins, when in fact only our spiritual guides are so. . . . We are supposed to be corrupted in the Serbonian bog of democracy, which we abhor! On these accounts [the letter continues] we have long wished and most affectionately desired a union with you, who dwell in a country we are united to by every tie of sacred love and gratitude.<sup>2</sup>

This patriotic entreaty, emphasized by the quarrel with the American Government, made a strong impression on the Methodist leaders in England. The Montreal letter was the beginning of the contention between British and American Methodism over Canada. The discontent it reveals accounts

<sup>1</sup> An American Minister supports this description from the other side by relating how, in leaving the Conference of 1818, he and three companions who had been appointed to British territory, 'parted in silence and with averted faces. The dear young brethren mounted their horses, when one of them, turning to me, said, "Ah, brother Paddock, if we could only stay at home as you do!" . . . There was I, a youth of nineteen, between two and three hundred miles from my father's house, in the wood amongst strangers, but was still "at home," because I did not go over the Niagara River into the dominions of George III!' It was an exile for the American.

<sup>2</sup> In this appeal reference is made to the fact that the Montreal Chapel had been largely built by English Methodist money.

for the appointment of so important a man as Nathan Bangs to Montreal, and for Burch's hurrying thither from Quebec on his detention. The rift thus disclosed was widened by the war into a chasm beyond filling.

By the departure of Burch Quebec was left to its own resources. Accordingly Langlois, when the temporary help of Paymaster Webster failed him, communicated with the Chairman of the Nova Scotia District, William Bennett, and through him with the newly created Missionary Society in London, who forthwith dispatched John Bass Strong from England to the vacant post. Arriving in June, 1814, this energetic and able man was warmly welcomed, and entered on his ministry with tokens of blessing. The earlier request from Montreal was officially renewed, and Richard Williams—an excellent choice—was sent in response, reaching the city about the time the war was concluded and when Burch withdrew to the States. Williams was installed in the use of the chapel and the direction of the Society there, he and Strong working under the direction of the Nova Scotia Chairman.

All this was done without consulting Elder Ryan, the official head of the District, who was far away in Upper Canada, and without communication made or notice given by the Missionary Committee in London to the authorities of the sister Church. The Americans could not but regard the British appointments as an intrusion and a contradiction of Wesley's saying in his last letter to the American Preachers that 'Methodists are one people in all the world.' The Genesee Conference of June, 1815, was attended by delegates from Upper Canada, and proceeded with Canadian affairs on the old footing, giving assurance that the utmost care would be taken to appoint to the colonies suitable Preachers, who should be more on their guard than in the past against occasions of political offence. The Lower Canada District was strengthened by the transference to it of the nearer Circuits belonging to the upper province. Montreal and Quebec remained on the Genesee list of Stations, with no Preachers at present designated for them, the British occupation being thus recognized *de facto*. Henry Ryan, from whose hands William Case, once more recalled from the States, took over the reins in Upper Canada, was made Presiding Elder of the enlarged Lower District, in the hope that his powerful leadership would



rally the neglected Circuits of the east. Ryan's high temper, unhappily, aggravated instead of allaying the friction in his new District; he said of the intruded Missionaries: 'I have opposed them in life; I will oppose them in death, and at the bar of God!' A section of the Montreal Society held aloof from the British Minister, to whom the Trustees had given the use of the chapel<sup>1</sup>; the American brethren set up a preaching-house of their own, the Genesee Conference of 1816 sending them an itinerant. Thus rival Methodist interests contended at this centre, round which the English Missionary formed a new Circuit. Quebec was quietly surrendered to the British.

The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, meeting at Baltimore in 1816, was attended, on invitation, by William Black (always *persona grata* with the Americans) and William Bennett from Nova Scotia, who presented the case for the British intervention; a letter from the London Missionary Committee was also read on the same behalf, expressing the desire for an amicable settlement of the dispute, but asserting the right and duty of the British Conference to extend its care to those in British colonies who were desirous of it. The American Conference in reply declined to surrender the Canadian field evangelized by its agents, who had the confidence of by far the greater part of the people and had carried on the work of Methodism continuously at every station except Quebec.

So matters came to a deadlock. The British Conference of 1816, now in the flush of the ardour attending the Missionary Society's birth, added four to the two men employed by it in Canada—one of these, John de Putron, designated to evangelize the French-Canadians; the other three recruits were James Booth, and Henry and Richard Pope. The brothers last named, who did much to establish the reputation of British Methodism in Canada, we have met in the lower provinces; they are described as 'compact, handsome little men, with a physique truly English.' The Missionary Committee justified itself in these appointments by the calls addressed to it from Canada; it was impressed, moreover, by the vast area and the spiritual needs of the North American British dominions, in which, as it conceived, there was ample room for the agents

<sup>1</sup> Up to this date there were but eleven Methodist chapels in the whole of Canada. The loss of the Montreal property was felt by the M.E. church as a serious injury.



of both Churches to work without collision. On the question of religious destitution, as Richard Watson acknowledged some years later, the missionary public in England had in some degree been misled by Canadian informants, who underrated the extent and efficiency of the agencies in operation. Political jealousies, the antipathy engendered by the recent war, and the fear of republican propagandism felt both in Canada and England, had more to do with the promotion of British Missions in North America at this epoch than the parties recognized.

The Canadian Church membership reported in 1816 was, for Upper Canada, 1,777 in number; for Lower Canada, 730 of the American and 60 of the British Connexion, with 163 enumerated in the border Circuits associated with American Districts—a total of 2,730 all told. This figure was several hundreds below that of the ante-Rebellion census. The old Bay of Quinte Circuit, with its offshoot of Smith's Creek, was transferred from the Upper to the Lower District (American), the two being thus equalized in size.

Seven Circuits, manned by nine Missionaries, appear in the British Stations for 1817, forming the District of 'The Canadas.' Operations were not confined to the lower province; we find British Missionaries at Cornwall and at Kingston,<sup>1</sup> in Upper Canada; only in the Quebec and William Henry (or Sorel) Circuits was there no trenching on preoccupied ground. At Montreal the Missionaries James Booth and Richard Pope held the field. In Quebec, where John Hick (from Prince Edward Island) had exchanged Circuits with John B. Strong, a new Chapel was opened for the growing congregation. Robert L. Lusher appears in charge of the Montreal Circuit in the Stations of 1818—the ablest Preacher sent from England

<sup>1</sup> From a letter written by Edward Johnson, who was stationed at Kingston, it appears that some of the British Missionaries had misgivings about their position, and objected to receive seceders from pre-existing Societies. An incident reported by Henry Pope soon after his arrival in the country illustrates the feeling entertained toward the new-comers by American Preachers on the ground. Pope had arranged to meet Elder Ryan at a spot near Cornwall, and found a prayer-meeting going on, conducted by the impetuous George Ferguson. Observing his entrance, the leader announced the hymn beginning 'Jesus, great Shepherd of the sheep,' ending in its first verse, 'For oh, the wolf is nigh!' 'It was amusing,' continues Pope, 'to see with what stentorian tones Bro. Ferguson went through the next verse:

He comes with hellish malice full,  
To scatter, tear, and slay, &c.

I was not in the least discomposed. . . . I had heard of Bro. Ferguson, who was a zealous, laborious, and useful Preacher.' The writer goes on to relate that at the conclusion of the interview with Ryan, the latter 'was pleased to say: "Young man, I find you of a different spirit and manner from what I feared and expected."'

to Canada ; his style was well adapted to a city congregation, and enhanced the reputation of the Wesleyan pulpit. The British Preachers generally commended themselves to the more established and educated town Societies. They were men of superior address and information ; they had a more business-like method, and maintained a steadier discipline, while supplies from England rendered their modest stipend more secure. On the other hand, the Americans understood colonial life as strangers could not ; their dialect was popular, their manners easy, and they lived on familiar terms with the people ; they were acclimatized, and habituated to the severe conditions of American travelling ; they made better scouts and frontiersmen. In diligence and devotion there was nothing to choose between the two sets of men. It was a grievous result of the war that these forces came into competition, where they might have so usefully co-operated.

Ryan and Case exchanged Districts at the Conference of 1817, the former returning to the west, where he was at home ; Case's milder spirit was better suited to the delicate tasks of administration in Lower Canada. 'The Canadas' now became a separate British District, to the charge of which the genial William Crosscombe was transferred from his Chairmanship in Newfoundland. Being at the same time Superintendent of the Liverpool (N.S.) Circuit, Crosscombe's oversight of the Canadas was little more than nominal ; John Hick acted apparently as his deputy in the Chairmanship.

Some notable men joined the American-Canadian ministry about this time. Nathaniel Reeder, American-born, was one of God's 'babes' to whom things are revealed 'hidden from the wise and prudent' ; he 'preached holiness, prayed for holiness, and lived holiness ; the devotion and joy of his sanctified spirit gave him a sort of unearthly appearance' ; and the people 'received him as an angel from heaven ; soul-saving was his daily work.' During the six months of his labours on the Ottawa Circuit—then a two weeks' round—he gathered 135 members into the Church, laying the foundation of its subsequent prosperity ; men of mark and power were converted under his ministry. But he was only lent to Canada for two years (1815-17). John Dempster was the son of one of Wesley's Missionaries of the time before the Rebellion, who had gone over to the Presbyterian ministry. Converted at a

camp-meeting in the States after an erratic youth, Dempster was put on probation to the St. Lawrence Circuit in the fall of 1815. He produced an extraordinary impression on the people, partly through his pathetic and impassioned eloquence, partly through his martyr-like endurance. For the greater extent of it his Circuit was then a wide wilderness, in travelling which 'during the cold season his horse broke down, and he went to his appointments on foot. His boots gave out, but he went on still, his feet constantly wet with snow-water. . . . His soul blazed, while his poor body withered under terrible hardships. The next Conference found him in a broken-down condition. He was removed southwards to a milder climate. Happily Dempster survived this stern apprenticeship. He proved as indomitable in the pursuit of learning as in physical hardihood, and became in mature years a leading scholar of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Dempster's Superintendent on the St. Lawrence round, but little senior in age, was Wyatt Chamberlayne, one of a pair of American brothers (Israel the name of the other) who bore themselves as stalwarts, both in body and mind, of the Canadian ministry. George Ferguson, an Irish soldier commandeered for the itinerancy at the close of the war, who, despite his British antecedents, held with the American Preachers, was employed in the hardest outpost service, and shrank from no privation.<sup>1</sup> He was renowned for his evangelical fervour and for his soldier-like exactness of discipline, seasoned with a lively humour. Isaac Puffer, who began his term of Canadian service amidst the revival of 1817, in the fullness of his powers was 'perhaps the most popular Preacher, so far as the masses were concerned, in the whole Genesee Conference. For forty years he sought no relaxation from the toils of an itinerant life.' Of a stout physique, built for endurance, he 'threaded forest-paths, forded rivers, plunged through snow-drifts, and faced the pelting storm. He preached in all sorts of places, and submitted without murmuring to all sorts of fare. Sometimes, after preaching in a log school-house or a slab shanty, he would

<sup>1</sup> Ferguson was a prime favourite with Elder Case, who one day relieved his famine by bringing him, unexpectedly, a quintal of cod-fish in his cutter from Montreal. Another time, observing the poor Preacher's 'pantalons to be nearly worn out, he called his attention to the matter by saying, "George, you very much need a pair of new trousers; let us make it a subject of prayer." Kneeling down, he asked the Divine Master's interposition on behalf of the needy helper, and a kind providence soon furnished the desired garment.'



retire to rest, and fall asleep while counting the stars through the chinks in the frail tenement, and in the morning perhaps crawl out through a bank of snow which had accumulated on his bed during the night. . . . Perfect artlessness of manner and a strong vein of common sense characterized his preaching.' No one quoted Scripture with such facility, accuracy, and aptness as Puffer. He expected, and constantly witnessed, the awakening and conversion of sinners. The American Preachers of the Canadian Circuits at this period were of the heroic type bred under Asbury—rough and ready in some cases, but always incisive, unconventional, and downright; the features of their character, as of their physiognomy, were more salient than those distinguishing their British brethren.

The Genesee Conference held its sessions of 1817 on Canadian ground, at Elizabethtown, in the Augusta Circuit, where 80 Preachers assembled. This was known as 'the Revival Conference'; a hundred well-attested conversions signaled its public services. The movement then beginning, which spread westwards through Upper Canada, resulted during the next year in the addition of 1,400 members to the Church. The personality of Bishop Enoch George, a man mighty in faith and prayer and who spake 'as the oracles of God,' counted for much in this memorable work of grace.

As time went on and both Churches extended their operations, the scandal of their rivalry, and of the partisan disputes and recriminations it engendered, grew more distressing. In the Stations of 1818 we find the Britishers planted, in response to local invitations, at the centres of American-Canadian Methodism. James Booth is appointed to the Bay of Quinte, and Henry Pope to York (Toronto), whose official influences discountenanced association with the States. York also figures this year, for the first time, as a Circuit town on the American *Minutes*. Competition thus presented itself undisguised. Strongly worded memorials were addressed from the opposing parties in the colony to the Conferences on both sides of the Atlantic. The Committee in England recognized the unseemliness of the strife, and wrote (February, 1819) forbidding its Missionaries to 'continue their labours in stations previously occupied by the American brethren, except when the population is so large or so scattered that it is evident a very considerable proportion of them must' otherwise



'be neglected.' The elastic *exception*, however, nullified the rule. Without a complete withdrawal of the British representatives from the larger part of the colony, it was impossible to avoid territorial disputes.

In 1819, simultaneously with the appearance of the letter from Hatton Garden quoted above, and in palpable contradiction to it, Henry Pope was sent to Niagara, carrying the invasion of the American field a stride farther. In this border country, ravaged by the late war, there were a number of respectable Methodists, who refused to associate with Americans and besought the appointment of a Preacher from England. But to the majority his coming was unwelcome; despite political differences they were attached to the old ministry, which had been so much blessed to them and to their fathers; they wished to bury the memories of the war, knowing it to have been as hateful to most of their American brethren as to themselves.

Amid all the contention we have described the work of Methodism throve greatly in the years succeeding the conclusion of the war; between 1815 and 1820 its Canadian Church membership was more than doubled. Not counting the Dunham and Stanstead Circuits, the two Canada Districts under the Genesee Conference numbered at the later date 5,577 members, almost equally divided between them. The British District, now embracing eight Circuits, reported 744 members, half of whom dwelt in or near the towns of Quebec, Montreal, and Kingston. In disproof of the allegation circulated in England that these colonies were 'destitute of the means of grace,' Case and Ryan in 1820 published statistics representing that Upper Canada possessed 211 recognized Protestant religious teachers, of whom 16 were Anglican clergymen, 15 Presbyterian or Congregational Ministers, 25 Baptist Ministers and Preachers of various sorts, and about 10 Quakers; while the Methodist travelling Preachers numbered 33 (5 only being European), aided by 47 Local Preachers and 65 licensed exhorters. The census goes to show that at this date *two-thirds* of the stated ministry of the word of God in Western Canada were supplied by Methodism. The American itinerancy had in thirty years, with most praiseworthy efficiency, spread the Gospel through this newly peopled land and its vast roadless spaces. The inhabitants numbered less

than 100,000 souls ; a country with one acting Preacher to less than 500 of its population did not seem to be greatly in need of Missionaries from abroad.

The Genesee Conference in 1820 revisited Canada, being held in Lundy's Lane Chapel, within sound of the Falls of Niagara. Bishop George again presided, and William Case was Secretary. About 100 Ministers attended. Out of the twenty brethren ordained to the ministry on this occasion were several who had fought on opposite sides in the sanguinary battle which took place at Lundy's Lane just six years before. As the service closed, these men ' were to be seen locked in each other's arms, shedding tears of fond affection.' At this Conference Elders Case and Ryan changed places once more, Case taking charge of the Upper District, which now extended southwards and westwards from Yonge Street to Lakes Erie and Huron, while Ryan returned to the Lower District, covering, with Lower Canada proper, the Ottawa Circuit and the northern coast of Lake Ontario as far west as York. At York Fitch Reed was stationed—a young American Preacher of talent, who, like others distinguished in the Methodist Episcopal ministry, was broken in to the itinerancy by a Canadian appointment. A letter written by him soon after Conference describes from the American point of view the tension existing in Canadian Methodism :

A general prejudice existed against the Society, really because of their simple-hearted, earnest piety and the obscurity of their social position, but ostensibly because they were subject to a ' foreign ' jurisdiction and their Ministers were mostly ' foreigners.' Our Ministers and people suffered many annoyances by reason of this foreign element ; we felt it more at the centre of Government influence than elsewhere. The feelings engendered by the recent war had not entirely subsided. This made it the more important that I should be so guarded as not to excite the suspicion of those who might be watching for occasions. My friends were careful to suggest, immediately after my arrival, that I would be expected to pray for ' the King and Royal Family.' Of course I was willing to do that, and replied that I had no doubt the King (George IV) *needed prayer as much as any man*. They smiled, and admitted that it was undoubtedly so.

Reed speaks of York as at that time ' a village of 1,200 or 1,500 inhabitants,' and ' a not very attractive place,' chiefly important as the seat of Government. It contained three places of worship—the English Episcopalian Church, a small

Presbyterian Church, and the 'little wooden, unpainted Methodist Church, forty feet square—an unpretending, barn-like edifice.'

This house [he goes on to say] was erected before there was a single Methodist in the town. Elder Ryan, two years earlier, had mortgaged the farm (on which he had settled his family) in order to procure the means for the enterprise. . . . A small Society was soon formed, and when I took charge of it, it numbered about 40 members.

No sooner had this movement commenced from the American side (in 1818) than the British Missionaries received a pressing call to plant a station in York, which they were not slow to accept.

The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church (1820) had met at Baltimore in May, three months earlier than the minor Genesee Conference. Ryan and Case were there among the Genesee delegates, to represent the affairs of Canada, over which the assembly was much exercised. The remonstrance of the last General Conference against the British encroachments had failed of its purpose. Despite the activity and success of the American Preachers and their well-deserved popularity, appeals for help from the mother country were multiplying in Canada. The rivalry and heart-burning had grown in the four years intervening, with the growth of the interests at stake. The strain of the situation was hardly tolerable; some remedy must be found.

The Conference reaffirmed the jurisdiction of its Bishops over 'our Societies in the Canadas—all except Quebec.' A letter was addressed to these Societies acknowledging their 'strong attachment' to the Church of their spiritual birth, and deprecating 'the evils which have grown out of the conduct of the Missionaries sent by the British Conference,' at the same time expressing reliance upon the integrity of that Conference and the belief that the English brethren 'have been misled by partial and erroneous statements, sent by interested persons in Canada.' Complaint was made of the neglect of the British authorities to reply to previous communications on the subject. The Baltimore Conference resolved that a delegate should be sent to the British Conference to lay the case before it in person; it was recommended further that a systematic interchange of visits by deputy should be established, with a view to the avoidance of future collisions and the maintenance of a



proper understanding between the two Methodist bodies. John Emory, a prominent Minister of the American Conference, was accordingly appointed to visit British Methodism on its behalf. Bearing a written address of greeting to the mother Church, Emory was instructed to state the views of the American Methodists in regard to Canada; by a subsequent resolution, he was empowered to treat for a division of territory on the basis of the retirement of the Methodist Episcopal Church from Lower Canada.

Emory found the Committee at Hatton Garden in a conciliatory mood. He satisfied this body that, in Upper Canada at least, his Church was competent for the work it had undertaken; that it was employing there an evangelistic force commensurate with the needs of the country, and on a scale equal to the provision it made for the new territories of the United States; that its ministry, moreover, was acceptable to the mass of the colonial people, and adapted to their wants. He asserted that his brethren were grievously wronged by the insinuation that they had acted in a manner inimical to the established Government in Canada. To guard against any possibility of this kind, the Baltimore Conference, as he reported, had inserted a new clause in the official Book of Discipline, prescribing it as 'the duty of Christians, and especially of all Christian Ministers, to be subject to the supreme authority of the country where they reside, and to use all laudable means to enjoin obedience to *the powers that be.*'

The London Committee 'heard the statements of Mr. Emory as to the exertions of the American brethren in the Canadas with great satisfaction and gratitude,' and recognized 'the candid and Christian spirit' in which he had discussed the existing disagreements. It adopted the proposal that 'Upper Canada should be left in the exclusive possession of the American brethren, and Lower Canada in the exclusive possession of our Missionaries,' and recommended its acceptance to the British Conference, details being 'left to future negotiations.' This plan was endorsed by the Conference, with certain provisos designed to ensure that no Circuit should be allowed to suffer in staff or equipment through the transfer. The Secretaries of the Missionary Committee on the one part, and the American Bishops on the other, were requested to send a circular to the



Churches concerned in explanation of the arrangements now made, and urging a peaceable acquiescence for the sake of the common good. The letter from the British side (signed by Richard Watson and Joseph Taylor)—a model of courtesy and fair dealing—contains a frank admission of previous mistakes. The line of division followed the political demarcation of the provinces, with two exceptions ; Kingston (U.C.) was retained by the British as being a garrison town where the presence of an English Minister was necessary ; on the other hand, the Americans kept the Ottawa Circuit, the larger part of which was situated in Lower Canada, for its division was inexpedient and most of its people hailed from the States.

Despite the efforts of the Methodist leaders on both sides, the readjustment was not effected without loss. In Montreal the little Episcopal Society, smarting under their deprivation of the chapel, refused to unite with the British Methodists, though both Case and Ryan urged this course upon its members ; in preference to submission they renounced their Methodism, and called in a Presbyterian pastor. In the like spirit, many who had joined the British Societies in the upper province declined the overtures of the American Preachers, misliking their manners and detesting their politics. These aggrieved people betook themselves to other Churches ; in some cases they were lost to religion. In other instances the change was submitted to with great unwillingness, and seeds of future dissension were sown. So hard is it to undo the effects of contention when it has once gathered force in the Church. Henry Pope, the British Missionary, who was no narrow partisan, thus estimates the situation :

The Rev. Dr. Emory's representations—or, as we Missionaries regarded them, misrepresentations—led our Committee in London to withdraw their Missionaries from Upper Canada, Kingston excepted. . . . The arrangement gave no satisfaction to any whom it most concerned, especially in Upper Canada.

Pope's misgivings proved to be well grounded. The Americans claimed the rights of paternity over Canadian Methodism ; they felt retirement from Lower Canada to be no small concession on their part. For thirty years they had devoted able young men and skilled and daring pioneers, whose services they could ill spare, to the work across the border. It

was hard to surrender ground won at such cost, and painful to part with brethren who cherished the institutions of Episcopal Methodism and revered its ministry. At the same time the distaste of important sections of the colonists for American ministrations was patent—a dislike turned into positive aversion by the events of the recent war ; and the rising tide of immigration from the old country constantly reinforced the strength of British predilection. The compromise made in 1820, which allocated to the Methodist Episcopal Church the whole western area, with its boundless possibilities of expansion, and confined British labours to the lower province amidst whose Romanist populace there was little room for progress, could not be permanently upheld. The American Conference was to find that its troubles with Canada, instead of being at an end, were only beginning.

## VII

### LOWER CANADA UNDER THE BRITISH CONFERENCE

Methodism in Lower Canada—Expansion of the British Sphere of Operations—William Harvard in Canada—The Rebellion of 1837—*The Wesleyan*—Work among French Canadians—Statistics in 1853-54.

THE anti-American movement in Canadian Methodism originated in the lower province, where it took effect through the partition of 1820 assigning that District to the care of the Missionary Society in England. The separation continued for thirty-five years. For the greater part of this period the divergence between the Methodists of Lower and Upper Canada appeared to increase rather than diminish; it was particularly marked in 1833, when a temporary alliance took place between the latter country and the British Conference, in which the Lower Canadians were vainly urged to participate. From 1840 onwards, when Upper Canadian Methodism re-assumed its separate existence, the alienation of the two provinces decreased, and the union of 1855, creating a joint Canadian Conference, was effected with cordial unanimity.

The force of British sentiment in the lower province was heightened by isolation. The English constituency of Quebec and Montreal, which in the latter city steadily prospered and increased, continued to be greatly outnumbered by the resident French population. In the country British settlements were few and far between, these being chiefly of recent origin and found along the streams on the right bank of the St. Lawrence, where Canadian territory broadens out toward the borders of the State of Vermont. This scanty agricultural population was poor and struggling; the country Circuits were bound to remain upon a footing of dependence, even when they had long passed the missionary stage. Beside Quebec and Montreal, Three Rivers was the single spot deserving the name of town; few other places were of sufficiently continuous habitation to

be even styled villages. The *habitans* presented an impervious front to Protestant advances. Lower Canada

can boast of perhaps the most compact, thoroughly organized, and aggressive type of Roman Catholicism to be found in the world. . . . Converts (to Protestant belief) are quickly ostracized, and subjected to so many indignities and disabilities that only a religious experience of the deepest and clearest kind can hold them in their new faith. It is estimated (in 1909) that since Protestant Missions began in Quebec, not less than 65,000 converts have left the province.<sup>1</sup>

Evidently the British Conference had undertaken the evangelizing of a toilsome field, from which large results could hardly be expected. No easy task lay before the Preachers of 'the Canada' District<sup>2</sup> when they met to reconsider their position after the decisive Conference of 1820. The British District commenced with but 744 members in Society, distributed in nine Circuits manned by the same number of Preachers; a tenth, John de Putron, is put down to 'the French Mission,' under instructions to work amongst the French-speaking Canadians wherever he could get access to them. This attempt proved so costly and unproductive that it was soon abandoned, de Putron returning to the Channel Islands. The Missionaries previously stationed at Niagara and York (U.C.) were recalled, and planted in new Circuits opened up in the lower province. The American part of the old border Circuits of Dunham and Stanstead was claimed by the Methodist Episcopal Church; Shefford and Stanstead remained as the British Circuit centres of this region. Next to Quebec and Montreal, the outlying Kingston was the most considerable place in the newly circumscribed District. No Circuit at this time had been formed between Quebec and the New Brunswick border; the Lower St. Lawrence shores were in purely French occupation.

The first Chairman of the reconstituted District was John Hick, a man of most estimable character and winning temper, who spent his ministry (1815-34) in the colonial service. His wife was the grand-daughter of Philip Embury, and worthy of her ancestry. With several of Hick's colleagues—Richard

<sup>1</sup> *New History of Methodism*, section on Canada, by J. G. Sutherland. At the same time it must be admitted that nowhere in the world is there a Romanism of a more estimable character, as judged by the devotion of its priests and the moral qualities of its laity.

<sup>2</sup> In consequence of the renunciation of Upper Canada, the title of the District now becomes *singular* instead of plural in the British *Minutes of Conference*.



Williams, Henry and Richard Pope, and James Knowlan—we are already more or less acquainted. The last-mentioned, whose course extended from 1806–45, was now brought over in 1821 from Halifax to Montreal. He was an Irishman of outstanding ability and force of character, educated for the Bar, who had forsaken inviting worldly prospects to minister to the despised West Indian negroes. Coming into contact with slavery in its most repulsive shape, he suffered severely in mind and body. Loss of health compelled his removal to the northern colonies, and for twelve years he had served his Church in Nova Scotia, where he distinguished himself as a Preacher and controversialist. Made Chairman of the Canada District in 1823, he presided with acceptance to his brethren and favour amongst the people. But he chafed under the rule of the Missionary Committee, in those days not always gently exercised. Knowlan was a high-spirited man, and at times unguarded in his language; he fell under a cloud in his relations to the authorities at home, and his faithful and honourable ministry was terminated by a premature withdrawal from active service. As we have noted in reference to the maritime districts, the correspondence between the Mission House and the colonies during the thirties and forties is marked by authoritativeness, and by touches of asperity on the part of the former that must have been painful and vexatious to sensitive Missionaries. The Missionary Society was impatient of the outlay required by colonial Districts at a time when heathen fields called loudly for its full attentions and overtaxed its resources. Men at home imperfectly realized the difficulty of carrying out strict plans of discipline and Church economics amongst scanty unsettled populations, and in the unwieldy Circuits of a country like Canada.<sup>1</sup> They applied English

<sup>1</sup> Disputes arose from the occurrence of incidental and emergency expenses which the Missionaries were compelled, in the absence of local resources, to charge on the Society at home, while the holders of the purse-strings laboured to confine the expenditure in each Mission District to a fixed pre-estimate. Another source of friction lay in the stationing of Missionaries, which was determined by the Conference, on the proposal of the Missionary Secretaries in July, at the beginning of the ecclesiastical year. The District Synods, meeting several months later, or the Chairman acting on their general authority, found themselves obliged to readjust these appointments in the course of the year, for reasons evident on the spot, but not always easily explained to those at a distance. These changes were matter of chronic misunderstanding; in the end, the Missionary Synods were allowed to draft the Stations and to make their arrangements for the ensuing year, subject to revision from home. Under the earlier conditions the Stations as given in the *Minutes* are a quite unreliable guide to the actual spheres of labour on the field. On the later method they should be read retrospectively.

measures to foreign conditions, and made small allowance for colonial opinions and prejudices, to which their agents in the field were compelled to bend. Knowlan's grievances were not singular; but he was probably less patient than some of his brethren who suffered from the same causes.

Robert L. Lusher remained in Montreal until he had seen, in February, 1821, the opening of the 'spacious and elegant chapel' at the corner of St. James' Street, the building of which was mainly due to the success of his ministry in this city. The older edifice, raised by the efforts of Samuel Coate, was handed over to the American remnant of the Church. After this Lusher was removed to Nova Scotia in exchange for Knowlan, to return at a later date.

A fresh Circuit was added to the Canadian (British) list in 1822 under the name of Burtonville-and-Russell Town—better known subsequently as Odelltown—which stretched from the banks of the St. Lawrence opposite Montreal to the New York State. This extension is mainly credited to a Local Preacher named Rustan, whose congregations valued him so highly that they insisted upon paying him a salary, and were slow to accept the itinerant sent to take direction of his work. At Three Rivers a chapel was built about this time—the third in the District—replacing the school-house hitherto serving the purpose, which was closed against the Methodists in pursuance of the policy of Bishop Mountain of Quebec.<sup>1</sup>

Joseph Stinson and Matthew Lang were sent to Canada from England in 1823—men destined to leave an indelible mark on Canadian religious life. Both were endowed with exceptional powers of mind and body, used with unflagging zeal; both exercised a ministry of unusual length and of exemplary character. Stinson took a distinguished place later in Upper Canada, as Superintendent of Indian Missions. In his early years at Kingston, 'his person, manners, youth, and eloquent preaching made him unboundedly popular.' He possessed much personal charm, and a gift for friendship which enabled him to form associations with the American Ministers of the upper province that proved of great value in later years.

<sup>1</sup> The first Bishop of this diocese, formed in 1793. This step was an indication of the growing hostility of the Anglican Communion to Methodism in the colonies, which had important results for religion. In those early times the Church of England held no evening services, and in the towns its people resorted in large numbers to the Methodist preaching on Sunday nights. In many parishes there had come about a tacit division of labour which the Bishop systematically discouraged.

With John Ryerson (one of three famous brothers whom we shall meet in the next chapter) Stinson contracted a close intimacy while in Kingston.

A third valuable accession came to the missionary band of Lower Canada in the autumn of 1823. John Fisher, of Quebec, Philip Embury's grandson and a hospitable merchant, hearing that a Methodist Preacher lay sick on board a vessel just arrived at that port, had the sufferer conveyed to his house. The stranger proved to be William Squire, who landed trembling with physical weakness and worn with West Indian fever. The young Missionary's heart was set on returning to the islands; but as his health revived he allowed himself to be drawn into Canadian work, and his new friends held him fast. The Mission House changed his designation, and Squire served in the colony, travelling in all its Circuits in turn for nearly thirty years, with the highest spiritual success. He died of cholera in 1852. Squire was a man of gentle, serious spirit, peculiarly tender and persuasive in appeal; 'as a pastor few have equalled, none could surpass him. The simplicity of his manners, humility of his bearing, and uniform consistency of his conversation' impressed the people for good wherever he moved. His term of ministry at Quebec, commencing with the spring of 1829, was in effect an almost continuous revival.

Realizing the importance of its work in Canada, the Missionary Committee drafted thither in 1826 two of its best approved young Ministers from the Nova Scotia District—Robert Alder and William Burt. Henry Pope was, however, simultaneously transferred in the opposite direction, and several others of the Canadian staff had removed, so that there were still but nine labourers in the field. The number of Circuits remained unchanged since 1820, while the Church membership by the year 1827 had more than doubled. The advance of this period took place chiefly in the country Circuits—St. Armand, Stanstead, Shefford, Odelltown, head the list in size of membership. Before the close of 1828 Burt and Stinson went home to England, the former never to recross the Atlantic, the latter to renew his labours in Canada at no distant date. Henry Pope had been commissioned, before his removal to Prince Edward Island (1825), to explore the Ottawa valley on the northern side (within the Quebec province) with a view to making a new Circuit for a British Missionary there.



While on this errand he had, as he writes, 'the unspeakable advantage of meeting with the Rev. William Case,' the Presiding Elder of the bordering Upper Canada District, who appears by his ingenious diplomacy to have arrested the British advance north-westwards, preserving Ottawa for the undivided control of the American Conference.

The years following 1827 were uneventful for the Lower Canada District; progress was difficult and slow, Popery presenting in many directions an insurmountable barrier. About 1833, however, the pace was quickened; a great ingathering took place at Quebec and Montreal—William Squire's soul-saving ministry counting for much in the latter Circuit—which raised the District membership in 1834 to the figure of 2,203. The chief part of the growth recorded since 1827 had been realized within the last two years. The Circuits had multiplied in seven years from nine to thirteen, now fairly covering the English-speaking parts of the province.

One is surprised to find *York* (Toronto) figuring again on the British Stations, showing a membership of 132. The Missionary Society regarded the agreement of 1820 as terminated by the separation of the Upper Canada District from the Methodist Episcopal Church of the States, which came about in 1828, and declared themselves free to accept invitations to labour again on the renounced territory. In that direction, it was more and more evident, the future expansion of the colony was bound to take place. This renewed invasion disquieted the little Canadian Conference of the west, and led to the negotiations with the Mission House that will come into view in the next chapter. The union of Upper Canada with the British Conference effected in 1833 was unwelcome to the Lower District, which incurred the displeasure of the Missionary Committee in London by its reluctance to enter into closer relations with its neighbours. This shyness was justified by the subsequent course of events; the amalgamation of 1833 proved to be premature. It is a curious thing to see the Ministers of the Lower Canada District censured from home for their ultra-British sympathies! They represented in their aloofness the almost unanimous sentiment of their people.

It was under these circumstances that Knowlan, who was not apt to submit to the dictation of any course which his own



judgement disapproved, was removed from the chair of the District he had filled for so long, first Richard Williams in 1831, then William Crosscombe (transferred from Nova Scotia) in 1832, being appointed to succeed him. 'You,' writes Dr. Beecham from the Mission House to the latter, 'are the only man in all British America to whom we can entrust Canada.' Crosscombe, however, in his turn was compelled by loyalty to his brethren, and by the facts of the situation, to take a stand which brought on him from the pen of Dr. Bunting a reproof of unmeasured severity, the terms of which, addressed to a man of his age and services, and of his gracious spirit, are truly astonishing; they show how far the wisest of men may sometimes err in dealing with circumstances remote from their personal knowledge, and with opinions which cross their cherished plans. John Barry, a young man of remarkable powers, who had been outspoken in opposition to the scheme for union, was removed from Montreal to Bermuda—to the great indignation of his friends in the colony—while Crosscombe was superseded after a year's occupancy of the District chair by William Lord—the President, appointed from England, of the new-fledged Western Conference, whose influence, it was hoped, would draw the two jarring Canadas together. Lord's conciliatory spirit relieved the soreness caused by recent events; his high-minded devotion tended to lift Canadian Methodism above its resentments and mistrusts.

The revival of 1833 continued its course, scarcely checked by the dissensions we have noted. Montreal under Crosscombe's ministry, and Stanstead Circuit under Squire's, witnessed a large ingathering of souls during 1834 and 1835. Quebec suffered a heavy shock in the sudden death of its beloved pastor, John Hick. Notwithstanding, its people shared in the tide of blessing. Extraordinary scenes attended the visitation of grace in Montreal. Spiritual harvesters came from across the border to help the overburdened Crosscombe in his reaping. He describes a Communion-occasion in which there were associated

Ministers from the great Wesleyan body in the United States and from Upper Canada with the Superintendent of Indian Missions (Joseph Stinson), uniting with the brethren sent out by the parent Society in Great Britain in receiving, and then administering to hundreds of heaven-

born spirits, the sacred emblems. . . . If this be not an emblem of heaven, I know nothing on earth that can furnish one. . . . Every brother seemed to drink largely of the same spirit ; our affection towards each other became so strong, that to separate was a painful duty. . . . A beautiful specimen of the indissoluble union which subsists between British, American, and Canadian Methodism, which shall be consummated in the climes of unfailing glory.

Similar fraternal impulses were manifest in other parts of the District—Quebec, for example—inviting to its pastorate Egerton Ryerson, whose name had stood with the Britishers for the American radicalism of Upper Canada. The blending of hearts effected in the warmth of the revival of 1834–35, and the help rendered by its neighbours to Lower Canada at this time of visitation, made beyond anything else for reunion. The alienation which had been growing for twelve years past was removed ; enduring ties of personal friendship were formed, and an intercourse was set up, furthered by the readier means of communication now available, which ripened at last into a complete understanding. Numerically, the fruit of the sustained revival of the early thirties was so large that, notwithstanding the surrender of the Kingston Circuit to Upper Canada, the Lower District reported in 1835 an increase of 264 upon the year ; its total Church membership was now close upon 2,500.

Up to this date (1835) the missionary staff in Lower Canada had not grown beyond the *nine* there stationed at the formation of the District, though the work had multiplied. It is now raised to the number of thirteen. William Lord, who figures as Superintendent of 'Montreal and St. John's,' was much occupied by his Presidency of the (Upper) Canadian Conference ; the burden of local work fell on his able colleague, Matthew Richey, who was at this juncture transferred from Nova Scotia. Recruits were now enlisted in the colony—the first to be called into the Methodist ministry on this ground. Three fathers of the Lower Canadian itinerancy deserve to be held in honour—John Borland, Edmund Sleep Ingalls, and John Rains. The first-named became a Preacher of unusual excellence and power, and fulfilled a long course of steady usefulness. The designation 'Assistant Missionary,' attached by the British Conference to young Ministers called into service on the Mission Fields, proved deterrent in Canada as

it did in the eastern provinces, for it implied an inferior status in men of local birth and breeding—an impression highly disagreeable to colonial feeling, which the home authorities were unable and perhaps not sufficiently anxious to remove. This error of policy was injurious to the self-respect of colonial Methodism, and checked the growth of its ministry.

The American camp-meeting, familiar for many years in Upper Canada, was now imported into the Lower District, the first gathering of this nature being held at Odelltown in the autumn of 1835, with the approval of the energetic and broad-minded William Lord. This British leader gave, moreover, a vigorous impulse to the foreign missionary movement, which had not hitherto taken hold of Lower Canada. The Missions to the red men carried on in Upper Canada became equally popular in the other province, where the Native Indians were no longer found in large numbers or in settled tribes. In almost every direction the Church received a quickening at this epoch, and developed into a larger life. The year 1835-36 witnessed a further increase of nearly 200 in the Society membership of the District.

In 1836 William Lord was succeeded, on appointment of the British Conference, in the double office of District Chairman to Lower Canada and Conference President to Upper Canada, by William Martin Harvard, who was a missionary veteran—one of Dr. Coke's companions on his last voyage. Not so demonstrative a Preacher as his predecessor, nor so business-like a Chairman, the new chief of Canadian Methodism was a man of equally fervent spirit and of superior manners—considerate, urbane, and dignified in his official bearing. He appears to have found the rough-and-ready ways of the colonials somewhat trying to his refined disposition.

The next Conference sent Robert L. Lusher back from England to Montreal—a most welcome appointment—putting him in the chair of the Lower District, so as to relieve Harvard of this burden.

The Rebellion of 1837, which disturbed all Canada, did not seriously check the advance of the Church in this District; the parties concerned in the rising found no sympathy in the ranks of Lower Canadian Methodism. This struggle, though



violent, and here and there destructive, was quickly terminated, the storm cleared the air, and left a calmer political atmosphere behind it. Robert Cooney thus describes the state of affairs at Odelltown :

Our Chapel was a temporary citadel, the Mission House a barrack ; the members of Society were transformed into soldiers ; the whole Circuit was converted into a camp ; of a truth our ' Zion ' resembled ' a ploughed field.'

At St. Armand, where he had newly arrived, the ardent and gentle-spirited Squire was brought to the verge of despair by ' the withering influence of civil war ' and ' the unsanctified character of our present affliction.' A fresh Circuit was formed at this time on the southern border toward New York State, under the name of ' Russelltown and Hinchinbrooke,' out of places on the Canadian side which previously to the Rebellion had been included in the contiguous District of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

A notable man joined the provincial itinerancy in 1837, in the person of Barnabas Hitchcock, known as ' the Blacksmith of Montreal.' He was no longer young, having been a light of Methodism in that city for a considerable time when he was called into the ministry, after rendering four years' probationary service in the capacity of lay agent. A strenuous and powerful man, Hitchcock had made himself widely useful as an evangelist in Canada and the States, and counted a host of friends on both sides of the border. He was eminently a soul-saving Preacher, and greatly built up the Church throughout his course. In 1839 the staff of the District was strengthened by the accession of a man of another type ; this was John Baxter Brownell (1826-63), son of one of the early West Indian Missionaries. Brownell possessed scholarship and intellectual gifts ; he had gathered experience of missionary work in fields so remote as the Bahamas and Malta ; in the twenty-four years of service he gave to Canada, he contributed elements of stability and instructiveness to its ministry which were of unique value.

After a temporary check in 1839-40 the Church membership of Lower Canada made a decided advance in 1841. Quebec during the previous winter had been gladdened by an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, through which hundreds of persons



were led to conversion.<sup>1</sup> A similar refreshing came to Montreal, to which city Squire, assisted by the able and devoted Hetherington, now gave a second term of labour. The increase is still more marked in the returns of the following year, by the end of which the District registered a membership exceeding 3,500, having realized a growth of nearly 50 per cent. in the last seven years. Compared to that of Upper Canada, Methodist advance in Lower Canada was slow. Our Church had here a limited scope and a largely preoccupied field ; but its progress was less agitated and contentious, the Methodists of the eastern province, if not so confident and adventurous as their brethren of the west, being more ' perfectly joined together in one mind and one judgement.'

The dispute which resulted (1840) in the severance of the Canadian Conference (U.C.) from the mother Church hardly affected Lower Canada, though it was watched with lively interest. When the Ministers who held to the British Conference, supported by about 1,600 Church members, parted from their brethren in Upper Canada to form the ' Western District ' under the direction of the Missionary Society, they ranged themselves with the Mission Church in Lower Canada, the latter now receiving the designation ' Canada : Eastern District ' in distinction from the new ' Western District.'

Early in the year of separation a fortnightly Church paper was launched in Montreal, with Lusher for editor, entitled *The Wesleyan*. Designed to promulgate Methodist principles and doctrines in a general sense, this publication was regarded as a counterblast to the *Christian Guardian* of Toronto, the organ of the Western Conference, which had played a prominent part in the controversy with British Methodism. *The Wesleyan* circulated widely in Upper as well as Lower Canada. Lusher's health failing soon after this, William M. Harvard, whose labours were now confined to the lower province, resumed the chair of the District, setting the former free to travel through the colony for the benefit of his health, and in the interests of his journal.

The year 1843, recording a Church membership of just over

<sup>1</sup> James Caughey, a Minister of the M.E. Church in Vermont, was a leading instrument of this awakening ; he had assisted with great effect in the previous revival of 1834-35, and took part in several later movements in Canada. This remarkable evangelist visited England about the year 1849, where his influence seems to have been not altogether of the wholesomest kind.

4,000, marked a climax in the growth of Methodism in Lower Canada; at this date 15 Circuits and 18 travelling Preachers appear upon the Stations. The Church was now entering upon troublous times, and her prosperity for the ten years ensuing appeared to be on the wane. The population of the southern counties adjacent to New England was to a large extent of American stock, and was peculiarly open to influences from across the border. Hence the Churches of this area were affected strongly, like those of the maritime provinces, by the Millerite Millenarian Movement, which spread far and wide during the autumn and winter of 1842-43. The Second Coming was definitely fixed by Miller for the spring of the latter year. A clever and popular Wesleyan Minister stationed at St. Armand fell under the spell of this delusion, and before resigning his charge sowed millenarian notions broadcast among Methodist people in his part of the country. The failure of the Adventist calculations did not at once arrest the propaganda; it was easy to revise the Apocalyptic timetable and to supply a fresh series of dates a little farther ahead. The Societies south of the St. Lawrence were troubled for years by these wild speculations, suffering from this cause a constant drain of their more emotional elements.

About this time a great effort in building was made at Montreal, which resulted in the opening early in 1844 of the new Church in St. James's Street, seating 2,000 people—the largest Protestant auditorium in Canada. The erection of this edifice, which supplied a rallying-point for Protestantism, indicates the popular position which Methodist preaching had won in the leading city of Canada.

Since 1825, when John de Putron returned disappointed to the Channel Islands, no Missionary had been set apart to care for the French-speaking Canadians, although the Missionary Society had constantly kept this object in view and sporadic attempts were made in this direction. Writing in 1843, the Missionary Benjamin Slight (1834-58), then posted at St. John's (L.C.), where he was surrounded by French Catholics, gives a hopeful account of attempts made to reach the *habitans*, auguring success for properly organized and sustained efforts on behalf of their conversion. He describes the first Missionary Meeting held at Chambly (1844), at which 'three converted Romanists pleaded the cause of truth.' One

of these<sup>1</sup> was encouraged to come forward as a lay helper, and Slight anticipates the formation of a French-Canadian Society-class. The *Missionary Report* for 1844 states that

if the Committee possessed the necessary means to cultivate with vigour and prudence, and, on an extended scale, this large field, much good might be accomplished.

The 'necessary means,' however, as in many like lamentable instances, were not forthcoming; help for colonial Missions was always given with a sparing hand, in pursuance of the parent Society's fixed determination to throw its children of kindred blood on their own resources. Anyhow, the failure to make any substantial impression upon the Romanist population of British North America remained a standing reproach to Protestant Missions in this country. Moreover, the Adventist doctrine prevalent at this time depreciated all missionary endeavours. What use, people asked, to organize and plan for the conversion of the heathen, and to tax oneself in contributions for the winning of a rebellious world to Christ, when the Lord Himself was due to appear within a few days or months, to finish the great business out of hand? Nay, pious people argued, it was the presumption of human policy, and a vain reliance on the arm of flesh, to attempt by the machinery of Missionary Societies what Christ designed to accomplish by His own glorious revelation from heaven! In this fashion Millenarianism has repeatedly checked the activities of the Church in its most earnest moods; it has supplied a high-sounding pretext for withholding in Christ's own name the tribute and service He requires. It so happened by an unfortunate concurrence that about the same time the wealth of the colony, after being impaired by a run of scanty harvests, was heavily reduced through successive conflagrations in which two-thirds of Quebec were laid in ashes. The disaster inflicted a double blow on Methodism, destroying both its churches in the city and simultaneously impoverishing its most liberal supporters. Not till 1851 was it possible to restore the first of the demolished sanctuaries. This was no time for launching projects of missionary advance.

Pecuniary help from home had come to be more than ever

<sup>1</sup> Two other speakers of this gathering were the Missionary Robert Cooney, an ex-priest, and a Baptist Bible colporteur of the colony.



out of the question. The Missionary Society was desperately straitened in consequence of the ecclesiastical troubles in England, and in the early fifties announced a sweeping reduction of grants to the colonies. The time was approaching for the complete devolution of local responsibility upon the older colonial Churches. The Canadian Methodists must soon shift for themselves. During the period of transition and preparation for the constitutional change, the forces of the District had to be carefully husbanded ; though opportunities for extension and aggression appeared, to turn them to account just then was out of the question. Through the whole thirty-five years in which the Lower District was under the charge of the British Conference, no effort to combat Popery was made upon anything like an adequate scale, or with such equipment as the formidable nature of the task demanded.

From the causes above indicated there resulted first a slackening in the rate of Methodist increase in Lower Canada, and then for eight years onwards, from 1846, a continued shrinkage in Church membership. Instead of being challenged and checked, Romanism gained further ascendancy in the colony. Its advance was furthered by the circumstance that the succession of unfavourable seasons led the Protestant population, less rooted in the soil than were the old *habitans*,<sup>1</sup> to migrate in large numbers, seeking homes elsewhere. The *Missionary Report* for 1853, apologizing for the decrease in this District, observes that the fruit of the Missionaries' labours is to be found in other quarters, particularly in Upper Canada and the United States. Commenting on the situation, John Borland, the District Secretary, had written in 1851 :

The French population are swarming into our midst, while many of those speaking the English language are going westwards. It is indeed a serious question whether the Lord can bless us according to our needs and desires, while practically neglecting so large a portion of those amongst whom we sojourn.

It was no ordinary colonial problem which confronted Methodism in Lower Canada ; the vital question here was, how to bring the Gospel to the French-speaking multitudes

<sup>1</sup> The French-Canadians were, and are, deeply attached to the land ; besides, they live more thriftily than English cultivators, and better understand the moods of the climate.



around whom Romanism had thrown its strongest entrenchments. With this great task no Protestant Mission had grappled.

The conviction was growing that Canada had to settle for herself her own questions, and that these demanded for their solution the resources of a united Canada. The east began to glance towards the west, on which it had in time past turned its back, looking across the Atlantic ; the time was coming for Toronto to apply her growing strength to the burdens of Methodist Quebec, which had been in many ways a channel of blessing for herself. With many hesitations, the Methodists of the Eastern province yielded to this necessity. Although peace had been restored (in 1848) betwixt the (West) Canadian and British Conferences, there remained enough of difference in the fashions of the two colonies, and enough of resemblance in Upper Canadian Methodism to that of the United States, to keep alive the old distaste.

The Missionary Committee in London, however, quickened the movement toward union by giving formal notice that it could not support the Canadian Districts in perpetuity, and must decline further responsibility for their work beyond the continuance for a few years to come of a diminishing pecuniary grant.<sup>1</sup> In 1854 the sagacious Enoch Wood, then President of the Canadian Conference, took by appointment from England the chair of the Eastern Synod, where he succeeded in allaying the old fears and in securing a unanimous vote from Ministers and laymen<sup>2</sup> for a resolution proposing to Upper Canada terms of union. Permission was given (of which, as it turned out, no one availed himself) for any Missionary reluctant to be severed from the British Conference to transfer his services to the West Indies. Two Ministers were lost by the change, John C. Davidson and Hugh Montgomery—both able men of considerable standing and much esteemed—whose Anglican leanings prejudiced them against the Canadian Conference. They found a home in the ministry of the Church of England.

The last year of the old order (1853-54) in Lower Canada was one of revival and recovered energy ; an increase of 214 brought the Church membership of the District nearly to the

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding announcements were made to the other missionary Districts of British North America.

<sup>2</sup> Laymen had been for the first time introduced to this Synod in 1853.

old level of 4,000. The District contributed to the enlarged Canadian Conference the number of twenty-four Ministers, in as many Circuits. In the appointments for 1855—the first year after the reconstitution—we find the one District divided into three (Montreal, Quebec, and Stanstead), and these three Districts comprising, on the same area as before, *thirty-four* Circuits manned by thirty-four Ministers. So great and immediate was the stimulus given and the reinforcement rendered possible through reunion of the long-divided factions of Methodist Canada. The new organization was launched with bright hopes for the future—hopes which in most respects have been fulfilled.

## VIII

### STORMY ADVANCE IN UPPER CANADA (1820-1840)

A Study in Ecclesiastical Principles—Historical Landmarks, 1820-1855—A separate Conference in 1820—Local Preachers—Ryanites—The Ryerson Family—Difficulties with the Anglican Church—Bishop Strachan—Separation of the Methodist Church in Upper Canada from the M.E. Church, U.S.—William Case—Missions to the Indians—British Alliance and Union of 'the Canadas'—Statistics in 1833—Political Agitation and *The Guardian*—The Cobourg Academy—The Clergy Reserves—A Rift between British and Canadian Conference—Colonial Independence.

THE Missionary Society, like the Apostle Paul in his great vocation, has a double task—that of evangelism and that of edification or Church-building; it bears Christ's salvation to new lands, and it forms in each of those lands out of the receivers of its message a Christian Society, endowed with the organs and functions of the 'Body of Christ,' and charged in its turn with the conveyance of the Gospel to the regions beyond. As respects Upper Canada, the second stage of this work commenced about the date now reached (1820). At this point the history of Canadian Methodism enters upon a phase of unique interest; its affairs during the thirty-five years that followed are full of lessons for the ecclesiastical student, and for the student of Methodist evolution in particular. The story is a tangled skein that requires patience and close attention for its unravelling. Colonial politics and parties, the sensitive, changeful relations of the new country on the one hand to its mother across the ocean, who was not always tender and considerate toward her offspring, and on the other to the vigorous and sometimes overbearing Republican sister at its side—these secular conditions supplied the channels along which the spiritual currents of the mid-nineteenth century flowed in Canada. In tracing the course of affairs thus broadly marked out, we shall see notable personalities emerge to play a decisive part at the turning-points of the Church's life.

It is a remarkable feature of the period under review that throughout its agitated debates on Church principles and administration the primary work of Missions went steadily forward and revivals were frequent ; the Gospel was preached with unflagging enterprise amongst the new settlers pressing further and further into the wilds, and to the Red Indian tribes, who at length began to receive the attention their pitiful condition demanded. Regrettable, and painful in some of their incidents, as were the divisions on Church matters which marked the thirties and forties, they were noticeably free from bitterness and scandal ; consequently they did not cause the hindrance to the Gospel which commonly arises from ecclesiastical contention. It was the good temper that, on the whole, characterized Canadian Methodist differences which made it possible to effect so soon a reconciliation. These were, after all, surface storms ruffling the underlying unity. To the Indian Missions a special chapter will be devoted following this.

The historical landmarks to be noted between 1820, the year of the Methodist partition of the Canadas, and 1855, when they were reunited under ' The Wesleyan Conference in Canada,' are as follows. In 1824 Upper Canada was detached from the Genesee Conference and formed a Conference of its own within the Methodist Episcopal Church ; in 1828 that Church consented to its separation under the title of ' The Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada ' ; in 1833 the newly formed body coalesced with the British Conference ; in 1840 it resumed its independence, as ' The Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada ' ; in 1847 it returned to the fold of British Methodism, to become finally, eight years later, in conjunction with Lower Canada, an ' affiliated ' self-governing branch of Methodism in communion with the parent Church.

The American General Conference of 1820, which proposed the division of Canadian territory between itself and the British Conference, received a request for the segregation of Upper Canada under a Conference of its own. This step was premature, the resources of the province being insufficient for the maintenance of a separate jurisdiction. Compliance was, however, not refused, but only postponed ; and when the petition was renewed at the General Conference of 1824, with the approval of the Annual Genesee Conference, consent was given. The two American-Canadian Districts (of Niagara and



the Bay of Quinte) now contained 6,150 members and employed 31 itinerants. These numbers hardly justified the pretension to Conferential status, and the distances and difficulties of travel for Canadian representatives attending the Genesee Assembly were not greater than those existing in other Conference-areas of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The reason which dictated segregation was political; so long as the Canadian Methodists owned allegiance to a 'foreign' ecclesiastical court, their preachers travelling across the border to report themselves and taking their orders from the United States, they were objects of mistrust to the colonial government; anti-British sympathies were imputed to them, and popular suspicion was easily excited against their work. With an annual Conference of their own and the measure of home rule secured by this arrangement, the Methodists under British rule hoped to escape, or at least to minimize, the aspersions cast upon them. But the gravamen of the reproaches under which they laboured remained so long as the Canadian Conference formed a part of the Methodist Church of the States; they continued to be under 'foreign jurisdiction.' The concession made in 1824 provided only a transition to the divorce that was effected four years later; the agitation for independence began as soon as the local Conference was formed.

Another constitutional trouble disturbed Canadian Methodism during the years 1824-28. The General Conference of 1820 had to deal with questions connected with the status and claims of Local Preachers. The vast size of the American Circuits made the work of the lay Preachers even more important than it was in England. In the intervals, often prolonged, between the itinerants' visits, these officers were responsible for the stated Sabbath worship, each in his own locality; they attended to the sick and buried the dead; in some cases (with or without official sanction) they administered the Sacraments. In their own eyes, and in the eyes of the people, they were virtual pastors. Here and there, in the earliest times, they were ordained to the Diaconate and even to Eldership. Conditions of space and of travelling made their circulation amongst the preaching-places of the enormous Circuit, and the introduction of the Local Preachers' Plan on the English model, impracticable. The Local Preachers'

Meeting of the Circuit, which has formed so valuable a part of the Wesleyan Methodist economy, had no existence across the water. Hence the lay Preachers of American Methodism were less disciplined and superintended, while they had less of a corporate and Connexional character than their brethren in England; at the same time, they had great influence in the local Societies, and were not infrequently under temptation to break away from control and form independent Churches. The early location of so many travelling Preachers who, according to American usage, though ceasing to belong to the separated ministry and pursuing a secular calling, retained authority to administer the Sacraments, and acted to a large extent as settled pastors, complicated the position. Some of these ex-itinerants, like Darius Dunham, Joseph Sawyer, and Sylvanus Keeler in Canada, were men of first-rate ability and commanding influence, whose services deserved grateful recognition and whose experience and force of character qualified them to be eminently useful in the counsels of the Church. Yet, like the rest of the lay Preachers, they had no voice in the affairs of Methodism beyond their own Circuits. The fact that the majority of the itinerants in whose hands lay the whole direction of the Societies were young in years, and inferior in knowledge of Methodism and in weight of judgement to the located Ministers and senior Local Preachers, made the anomaly the more glaring. An agitation had been set on foot, attaining considerable dimensions in the States, for admitting Local Preachers, by representation, to the Annual Conferences, which up to this time, and for long after, consisted of itinerant Preachers only. Instead of opening the door to the applicants, the General Conference instituted a separate Local Preachers' Conference for each District, to which it assigned certain limited administrative and consultative functions, without legislative power. The Conferences of Local Preachers thus created did not give satisfaction and were soon discontinued in the States; they were regularly held in Canada, though but ill-attended, until the union with British Methodism brought about the substitution of the Circuit Local Preachers' Meeting. In 1821 the first Canadian gathering of this kind took place under Henry Ryan's presidency, Dunham acting as its Secretary. The assimilation of the Local Preachers to the ordained ministry, and the failure to give their order a properly

adjusted place in the system of the Church, led to protracted conflict in the Methodism of both the United States and Canada ; this train of events has contributed with other causes to the decline of local preaching in the American Methodist Churches.

The discontent shared by the Local Preachers of Canada with their brethren of the South supplied material for the Ryanite agitation which broke out in 1823. The defects of Henry Ryan's remarkable qualities had grown upon him with the course of years. He had been Presiding Elder now for many years, and the exercise of power appears to have stimulated a naturally domineering temper and ambitious mind. Enjoying much popularity with the laity, he gave frequent offence to his brethren in the ministry. At the Genesee Conference of 1822 he had the vexation of finding himself, for various reasons, excluded from the list of representatives to the ensuing General Conference in the States. This he regarded as an affront upon him, Presiding Elder as he was of the Bay of Quinte District. On returning home, with the help of an able Local Preacher and Elder named David Breckenridge, he summoned a series of conventions, in which he urged the entire separation of Canadian Methodism from the Church in the States. Cases were advocated at the Genesee Conference the middle course, which was actually adopted, of giving to Canada an Annual Conference of its own, subordinate to the Quadrennial General Conference. From these irregular meetings petitions were addressed to the General Conference of 1824 to the effect above stated, the two leaders being appointed as delegates chosen to represent to that Conference the views of the petitioners. Ryan and his companion were of course refused admission to the Conference at Baltimore, at which they had no *locus standi*.

<sup>1</sup> A motion was sent up from the north, which the General Conference rejected, to have the Presiding Elders appointed by election in their Districts instead of by nomination of the Bishops. Case and Ryan were both unfavourable to this resolution, and their opposition was one reason why they were not amongst the Conference delegates.

<sup>2</sup> Ryan had vehemently disapproved the movement for lay representation to the General Conference, which at this time was agitating the M.E. Church in the States. He denounced it as subversive of Methodism, and sought, as he declared, to save Canada from this calamity. The General Conference of 1824 would have nothing to do with lay representation. He appeared to be guilty of a glaring inconsistency in taking David Breckenridge with him to the 1824 Conference as co-delegate under appointment by the Local Preachers ; probably he obtained this order, at any rate after ordination, as a status above that of mere layman. His hostility to the American Conference seems to have been due in the first instance to the odium which association with it brought on Methodism in Canada during and after the war of 1812-14—an ill-will aggravated in Ryan's case by his early American connexions.



The complainants were allowed, however, to appear before the Committee of Conference which considered the points at issue, and had a tolerant hearing. On the question of Separation, the General Conference consented to the Constitution of an Annual Conference for Canada, in accordance with the views of the official Canadian representatives. At the same time, the General Conference cancelled the suspension of Wyatt Chamberlayne, Superintendent of the Kingston Circuit and elected representative to Baltimore of the Genesee Conference, a suspension which Ryan had inflicted by an arbitrary exercise of his power as Presiding Elder.

Ryan returned from Baltimore thoroughly incensed. He at once summoned the Local Preachers of his District to meet at Elizabethtown, and laid his grievances before them. Supported by Breckenridge, he induced this meeting to pass resolutions affirming the right of Canadian Methodism to manage its own affairs independently of the American Conference, and requesting the travelling Preachers to endorse their action and without delay to reorganize the work in the colony upon this footing. In the event of the itinerants refusing to accept their mandate, the Local Preachers declared themselves ready to assume the responsibility of providing for the Circuits. A revolution was thus hatched, by the Presiding Elder of the Bay of Quinte District, in the birthplace of Canadian Methodism. Ryan's action was generally condemned, and he was under the suspicion of exploiting popular grievances for personal ends; but the Elizabethtown demonstration, whatever its motives, was calculated to spread debate and unsettlement through the Canadian Circuits. The Annual Conference now instituted for Canada held its first assembly in August at Hallowell (afterwards Picton). Bishops George and Hedding came for the inauguration, accompanied by Nathan Bangs from the States. The three visited many of the Canadian Circuits on their way to Conference, seeking to ascertain the feeling of the Societies and to allay the irritation caused by Ryan. In the latter endeavour they largely succeeded, preparing the way for a calm discussion of the questions so intemperately mooted. They found, however, Canadian opinion to be tending decidedly toward self-government; ecclesiastical separation, they perceived, must ultimately come about. The Bishops frankly admitted to the Conference the advisability of



seeking at the next General Conference an independent Church status for Canada. With this understanding Ryan and his party professed to be satisfied, pending the decision of the American General Conference. Ryan had the mortification, however, of finding himself deposed by the Bishops from the Presiding Eldership,<sup>1</sup> in consequence of his disloyal action, and he speedily resumed his agitation, quitting the Mission to which he was appointed with the protest that it was useless to seek justice from the Americans. Supported by David Breckenridge and his son, a young travelling Preacher of some mark, along with two other itinerants and about 200 Church members, in a few months Ryan formally seceded, setting up a new Society under the name of 'The Canadian Wesleyan Methodist Church.' The Ryanite community declined after its founder's death (in 1833), and in 1841 it was merged in the Methodist New Connexion (of England), which had by this time planted itself in Canada.

The Church membership reported at the Canada Conference of 1825 stood at the figure of about 6,100, including 56 Red Indian and 22 coloured people. Since the war it had increased threefold. There were 33 itinerant Preachers, including 14 on trial. A Canadian Missionary Society was formed at this Conference, with Thomas Whitehead for its President and John Ryerson for Secretary.

John Ryerson was the first to enter the ministry of a trio of brothers who for the next thirty years stood in the forefront of the itinerancy, and exercised a predominant influence in the moulding of Canadian Methodism. Their father was Colonel Joseph Ryerson, a notable United Empire Loyalist who occupied an estate near to Long Point, on Lake Erie. The elder sons of this gentleman—George,<sup>2</sup> William, and John—about the year 1820 were converted to God under Methodist influence. They joined the Society with their mother's approval, but much to the displeasure of their father, who was a stout and intolerant Anglican. Though barely of age, John was soon set to preach by Elder Case, and in 1821 commenced his probation for the ministry. Inferior in popular

<sup>1</sup> Case was made P.E. of the Bay of Quinte District, and Thomas Madden promoted to this office in the Upper District.

<sup>2</sup> George Ryerson was a devoted Christian man, and served in the ministry for some years, but was drawn away by the Irvingite movement. The youngest of the five brothers, Edwy, had also a brief experience of the itinerant life. Neither of these had the talent of the other three.

gifts to his brothers, John was the best theologian of the three and the man of most solid mind ; his weight of character, and firm resolution, and grave judicial temper gave him singular authority and a steadying influence which counted for much in troublous times. William, though senior in age, joined the itinerant ranks two years later, when already married. Surmounting his disadvantages of appearance and address, William Ryerson rose to an extraordinary pulpit power. A fire slumbered within his heavy frame ; when he was roused his speech possessed a magnetic thrill that conveyed ' his emotions, whether of fear, hate, indignation, scorn, or tenderness, to his hearers.' For many years he was the most affecting and persuasive Preacher in Canada ; none ever ' drew so many tears.' Egerton was still a boy when John and William began to preach ; but the same convictions were at work in his mind as in theirs, and he followed their steps a little later. He was the greatest of the trio, combining breadth and versatility with intensity of nature, and excelling in literary even more than in oratorical power. Egerton Ryerson grew to be the statesman and Church leader of Canadian Methodism ; and filled a place in its history resembling that of William Arthur or Hugh Price Hughes in British Methodism. It would be difficult to find a parallel instance of three brothers alike eminent in the same profession and acquiring by their union so paramount an influence.

Along with Egerton Ryerson, James Richardson commenced his probation in 1825. Canadian born, like the Ryersons, of cultivated mind and ready pen, Richardson was early advanced to important offices in the provincial Conference. His jealousy for independence led him to disapprove of the manner in which the union with the British Conference was effected, and in 1833 he finally cast in his lot with the irreconcilables who seceded at that date, and became Bishop of the ' Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada ' then constituted. But he carried no bitterness into the separation, and remained to the end on terms of kindness with his old colleagues. There were two other men of note among the probationers who began their course at the first Canada Conference—John Black and Anson Green. The former—an Irish schoolmaster, settled for some years in Canada, already in middle life—had the best qualities of his race—a man of the liveliest activity and

wit and the heartiest affection, 'as vivacious as a spring brook.' Wherever he travelled the Societies felt the glow of his overflowing vitality. Black's contemporary, Anson Green, also a schoolmaster, born in New York State but domiciled in Canada, was still in early manhood. Strong and capable in many directions, of popular gifts and well-balanced mind, in his ministry of fifty years Green came to rank next to the Ryersons amongst the leaders of his Church. His well-written autobiography<sup>1</sup> furnishes one of the best sources of information respecting the inner life of Canadian Methodism at its critical epochs.

Anson Green's friend and mentor was Franklin Metcalf, who began his ministry in 1818, and was now at the prime of his vigour. William Ryerson and he were accounted the two greatest Preachers of Canada. Green describes him as

the model Preacher of the Connexion; deep in Christian experience, pastoral in habits, neat but not fine in dress, commanding in appearance, gentlemanly in intercourse with society. . . . And a sound, discriminating judgement, a logical mind well stored with facts and ideas, a remarkably clear and methodical way of arranging his subjects and presenting truth, a forcible strain of simple eloquence . . . and a melodious voice. It was a luxury to hear him.

Metcalf was a thorough Canadian in his views and sympathies; he belonged to the group of able young men which the Methodism of the province produced for its ministry at this time, uniting intellectual power with evangelical fervour and daring enterprise. The shaping of its future lay in their hands. He was early raised to the Presiding Eldership; and it was matter of deep regret when, through loss of health, he sought retirement in middle life.

A story told by Anson Green from the lips of a Yorkshire Methodist woman living in his first Circuit (Smith's Creek) illustrates the work of frontier Preachers in early days, and the connexion between home and colonial Methodism.

When we came to these woods [she said] we were three years without seeing a Minister. Hearing that one was to preach at — I travelled out fifteen miles on foot to hear him. My heart was filled with comfort, and I begged him to come to the bush and preach in our house, promising that, if possible, every person in the township would be present to

<sup>1</sup> *The Life and Times of Anson Green, D.D., Written by Himself.*



near him. He consented. On the day appointed . . . I went to every house, and got a pledge that every man and woman would be present at the appointed hour. On my way home I saw the tracks of a horse in our field, and knew it must be the horse of the man of God who had come to bring the Gospel to our forest. . . . Tears came to my eyes ; my heart throbbled with emotion ; I sank upon the earth and kissed the ground on which the horse had trod which brought the man of God to our township. I thought of former times in Yorkshire, and then and there renewed my covenant with God, pledging myself to do all I could to spread the Gospel through these forests.

The initial Conference of 1825 addressed itself to two matters indispensable for the welfare of the Methodist ministry. It took measures : (1) For 'the intellectual improvement of the young Preachers,' recognizing that they should have 'more advantage for the improvement of their minds, in order to meet the wants of society now improving in literary acquirements.' A comprehensive book list was drawn up, and the Presiding Elders and other senior Ministers were requested to pay strict attention to the reading of probationers. (2) The position of superannuated Ministers was carefully defined, and the beginning made of a regular provision for their wants.

In the year 1825-26 a controversy began which had far-reaching results in the history of the colony and of Canadian Methodism. A small but determined party, influential in Government circles, had been aiming to reproduce in Canada the English Church Establishment.<sup>1</sup> The Anglican clergy, though their numbers were few and their following small, held a privileged position, as in other American colonies, being alone legally entitled to solemnize marriage<sup>2</sup>—a restriction highly injurious, as well as invidious, in a country the great

<sup>1</sup> The following paragraph from the reply made by Sir John Colborne, the Governor-General of Canada, to the loyal address of the Methodist Church presented to His Excellency in 1831, reveals the contemptuous attitude which the provincial Government, directed from England, assumed toward the Nonconformist majority of the people : 'You will allow on reflection that it would indeed be imprudent to admit the right of Societies to dictate, on account of their numerical strength, in what way the lands set apart as a provision for the clergy should be disposed of. The system of education which had produced (under the auspices of the Anglican Church) the best and ablest men in the United Kingdom will not be abandoned here to suit the limited views of the leaders of Societies who, perhaps, have neither experience nor judgement to appreciate the value or advantages of a liberal education.' The faction which for many years occupied the seats of the Legislative Council and confirmed the policy of Government, known as 'The Family Compact,' was drawn mainly from a few aristocratic houses belonging to York (Toronto), whose members were linked by inter-marriage. Dr. John Strachan was the clever counsellor of this remarkable ring.

<sup>2</sup> Canadian law, however, provided that in places above fourteen miles distant from the residence of a clergyman the nearest magistrate should have power to officiate.



part of which was far outside Anglican boundaries. Amongst other grievances keenly felt by the Nonconformist bodies were the difficulties thrown in the way of their securing a legal title to Church property. The struggle against Anglican ascendancy, which up to this date had been carried on for the most part in silence and behind the scenes, turned mainly upon the appropriation of the Clergy Reserve Fund, which came into existence in 1794 through the dedication by Government, in the general allocation of land then made, of one-seventh of the whole area for the furtherance of religion in the province. Hitherto the funds derived from this source had been applied solely for the benefit of the English Church, which, however, had so far made little use of this source of revenue in consequence of the limited extent of its operations. But it looked to the Clergy Reserve Fund as an endowment ready to be drawn upon for its sole enjoyment as occasion might demand. The Presbyterians contested the exclusive right of the Church of England to the use of this fund; the other Dissenters, combating the whole principle of State endowment, called for its appropriation to non-sectarian objects. The simmering discontent broke out in the summer of 1826, on the occasion of a funeral sermon preached by Dr. Strachan, the Archdeacon of York, in honour of Bishop Mountain, lately deceased, the first Anglican Diocesan of Canada. The Archdeacon made his discourse the vehicle of a wholesale impeachment of Nonconformists, containing gross mis-statements, and charging the Methodist Preachers in particular with being 'incompetent, idle, disloyal, and ignorant.'

To this insolent attack a spirited reply was promptly forthcoming in the columns of *The Colonial Advocate*, a Liberal newspaper, signed by 'A Methodist Preacher.' This letter was the signal for the outburst of a storm. It provoked violent rejoinders from the Anglicans, which the writer, soon known to be Egerton Ryerson,<sup>1</sup> then a probationer of twenty-two, met with uncompromising thoroughness and admirable debating skill, carrying the war into the enemy's camp. His

<sup>1</sup> Colonel Ryerson, a stout old Tory Churchman, hearing of his son's authorship, exclaimed: 'My God, we are all ruined!' Anson Green describes the emotions this famous letter excited amongst Methodists. 'We (i.e. his colleagues and himself) read and wept, and speculated about the unknown author. Again we read and wept, and then kneeled upon the grass and prayed, and thanked God for the able and timely defence against the falsehoods that were being circulated amongst the people.'

precise facts, convincing logic, and biting sarcasm gave him a complete dialectic victory. The controversy lasted more than a year, and in it the pent-up indignation of Canadian Nonconformity against ecclesiastical usurpation and legalized injustice found full vent. The whole colony was roused on the subject ; nine-tenths of the people were found to be against the Anglican pretensions. The question was carried to the floor of the Canadian House of Assembly ; and from this time it was never laid to sleep until, in the fifties, the Clergy Reserve Fund was resumed by the State and devoted to public education. Dr. Strachan—a shrewd, clever Scotchman—remained for many years the able and not very scrupulous leader of the Church of England party ; he became the first Anglican Bishop of Upper Canada.

Visiting England in 1827 to obtain a charter and an endowment for the denominational University he had planned in the memorandum presented to the British Government on the subject, Dr. Strachan took advantage of the American alliance of Canadian Methodism to brand its people with disloyalty to the British Connexion, and urged the necessity of multiplying the Established clergy in order to prevent the Americanizing of the population through the arts of the Methodist itinerants. This slanderous manifesto led to the appointment of a Committee of Investigation by the provincial Parliament in 1828 which completely exonerated the Methodists from Strachan's imputations. The Committee took occasion further to state that

There is in the minds of the people generally a strong aversion to anything like an Established Church. There is, it was said, no necessity for such an establishment, neither for the security of the Government, nor for the ends of religion. . . . Upon this subject His Majesty's Government ought to be fairly and distinctly apprised of the sentiments and wishes of the people.

This report, with an address to the King in the like sense, was adopted in the House of Assembly by a two-thirds majority and forwarded to England. The ambitious plans of the handful of English Churchmen were foiled for the time. Although the Upper House of the Local Legislature threw out again and again measures adopted by the representative chamber for securing religious equality and the two Houses

were habitually at issue on ecclesiastical matters, the force of public opinion gradually made itself felt. In 1828 provision was made for all Christian denominations to hold property for religious purposes<sup>1</sup>; in 1831 the marriage disabilities operating against Nonconformist Ministers were removed; but the Clergy Reserve Fund remained a bone of contention for many years to come.

The Canadian Methodists, led by Egerton Ryerson, in opposing the attempts made to endow the Church of England from a State Fund and to secure for it a privileged position in the colony, adopted Nonconformist principles and arguments which gave offence to Methodist leaders in England, who retained the old Wesleyan tenderness toward the national Church and dissociated themselves and their people from all meddling with the question of disestablishment. But it was one thing to assail a venerable institution rooted in the soil and by force of usage and hereditary ties holding the affection of multitudes, and quite another to resist the foisting of that institution upon people who had neither taste nor need for it, the vast majority of whom found their spiritual home in other Communion.

The Canada Conference of 1826, which met at Hamilton, divided the two Districts previously demarcated into three—that of Augusta in the east, of the Bay of Quinte in the centre, and of Niagara covering the west of the province. Philander Smith was the new Presiding Elder, raised to this dignity in the seventh year of his ministry and put in charge of the eastern District. A native of the United States, but converted to God and called to the ministry in Canada, he had proved himself an able and inspiring Preacher and high hopes were entertained respecting his future course. Failing health, however, compelled his early retirement to the States. On returning to Canada some years later, he associated himself with the Methodist Episcopal Church formed by separation from the mother Conference in 1833. Philander Smith, like James Richardson, who took a similar course, became a Bishop of the separatist community. Henry Ryan was superannuated by way of discipline at this Conference. The Conference of 1827 put him on his trial, with the issue related on p. 412.

<sup>1</sup> Up to this date all Methodist property in the colony was held in the name of private persons; now trusts could be formed.



While Ryan disappeared from the Canadian Stations in 1827, that year witnessed the first appearance in the list of Ephraim Evans (elder brother of James Evans), a native of Hull, in Yorkshire, who had received a good English education, but whose religious life began in Canada. Through a long career he rendered conspicuous and various service to colonial Methodism ; he showed himself from the first ' the easy, fluent, self-possessed, persuasive Preacher, and capable pastor.'

As had been anticipated, the formation of the provincial Conference for Canada in 1824 proved the stepping-stone to complete independence. The request to this effect made in the memorial of the Canadian Church had been endorsed by most of the Annual Conferences in the States, to which it was sent round. The General Conference of 1828 acted with much wisdom and forbearance. Reluctant to part with its vigorous Canadian limb, the Church in the States at first was disposed to regard the severance as constitutionally inadmissible.<sup>1</sup> In the end, however, it consented to separation, and approved the establishment of a complete autonomous Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada, as advised by Bishops George and Hedding. The principal considerations which led to this decision were: (1) the state of Canadian society, the continued effect of the late war upon colonial popular feeling, and the invincible prejudice felt against a Church subject to control from the United States ; (2) the long journeys which connexion with the Conference in the States involved ; (3) the possibility of another war, which would render administration by the Church in the States impracticable ; (4) the expectation that ministerial status, including the right to solemnize matrimony, would be more readily accorded to the Canadian Preachers by the provincial authorities when belonging wholly to the colony, and that the settlement of Church property would be facilitated by the change. The separation was conceded by the Americans in a generous spirit. The Canadians were allowed to retain their interest in the Book Concern at New York so long as they chose to make use of it. Continued aid was promised to

<sup>1</sup> The American legal mind of the M.E. Conference was reconciled to the partition by the consideration that American Preachers had never been sent to Canada, as to the ordinary home appointments, by the mere order of the Bishops, but only as *volunteers*. This distinction, it was argued, was a tacit recognition of the fact that the Canadian Circuits were foreign stations. They might therefore be severed from the body of the Church without impairing its integrity, and without creating a precedent for internal secession.



the Canadian Missions to the Red Indians. The American delegate to the British Conference was instructed, in announcing the change made in the status of Upper Canadian Methodism, to request that body to abide by the compact of 1820, confining the operations of its Missionaries to Lower Canada.<sup>1</sup> On the assumption that the new Church would retain the Episcopal constitution, it was provided that any General Superintendent or Bishop it might elect should be ordained to his office by some Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church assisted by two or more Elders, provided the election was made before the General Conference of 1832. With some misgivings as to how a child of such tender growth would contrive to walk on its own feet, the Methodist Episcopal Church thus emancipated its Canadian offspring and sent it forth with a blessing.

The Canadian Conference met in October under the presidency of Bishop Hedding—the last Bishop to appear in Canada in this capacity. This assembly accepted the proposals sent down from the General Conference substantially as they stood, and resolved on the formation of a Methodist Episcopal Church for Canada, accepting for its basis the discipline of the parent Church, with such modifications as local circumstances might render necessary, the few alterations made being in the direction of giving laymen increased power in Church management.<sup>2</sup> The desire was expressed for a closer intimacy with Methodism across the seas by the appointment of a standing Committee of three 'to correspond with the British Conference in order to establish a friendly relation and intercourse between the two connexions.' Before the Conference closed, William Case, now the eldest Canadian itinerant, was chosen General Superintendent to act until the next Conference. He did not, however, seek ordination as *Bishop*—the designation he went by was that of 'President *pro tempore*.' Overtures were made to several leading American Preachers, including Nathan Bangs, with a view to securing a suitable Bishop ; but these attempts failed,

<sup>1</sup> The Missionary Committee, however, and the British Conference did not accept this view of the situation ; they very shortly sent Ministers on invitation once more into Upper Canada, regarding their agreement with the Methodist Episcopal Church respecting Canada as cancelled by the change.

<sup>2</sup> The chief provisions of this nature were : (1) that in the appointment of a class-leader the itinerant Preacher should consult the members of the class and the Leaders' Meeting ; (2) that the Quarterly Meetings should have a power of veto upon any legislation of the Conference affecting either financial or doctrinal questions, and that no measures of either kind should have effect until they had been approved by a majority of these meetings.

and no ordination to the office ever took place. The Episcopal constitution remained, therefore, in abeyance ; meanwhile the Canadian Conference gravitated towards British Methodism. Case was now set apart to the charge of the Indian Missions ; his place in the Presiding Eldership of the Bay of Quinte District was filled by William Ryerson. John Ryerson in the previous year had succeeded Thomas Madden in the charge of the Niagara District ; Philander Smith remained Presiding Elder of Augusta. The two Ryersons showed themselves remarkably energetic and inspiring leaders.<sup>1</sup> The Conference of 1828 registered, despite the Ryanite disturbance, a Church membership of 9,678, nearly a tenth of whom were Indians ; the increase for the year had been 664. There were 50 travelling Preachers under the direction of the Conference, in 31 Circuits and Missions.

The Conference of 1829 re-elected Case as its ' President,' James Richardson as Secretary. It recorded an addition of above 500 to its membership, the total number being now well over 10,000. The comparative smallness of the increment was due to the Ryanite schism, which continued to disturb the central District. The temperance movement, which was now becoming active in America, received encouragement from this Conference. Sunday-school organization was improved, and provision made for its extension through the Circuits. Committees were appointed to consider suggestions made : (1) for the establishment of a Connexional Seminary of higher education ; and (2) for the starting of an official Methodist newspaper in the province. With the second measure it was decided to proceed at once, in view of the urgent demand for an organ through which Canadian Methodism might express itself with authority and effect on general religious questions of the day. Egerton Ryerson was elected editor of the *Christian Guardian* (as the new journal was to be called), with Franklin Metcalf for his assistant, a Committee of five laymen being appointed to conduct its business affairs. The scheme was taken up with eagerness both by Preachers and people, and the *Guardian* assumed from the start a foremost place in the

<sup>1</sup> William Ryerson was strict in discipline both toward himself and others ; at the same time he did much to secure a proper maintenance for the itinerants. ' I am determined,' he said, ' that the Preachers shall serve the people faithfully, and that the people shall support them well.' He was accounted at this period the most powerful pulpit and platform orator in the whole of Canada.

journalism of the province. It spoke with no uncertain sound. '*Liberty and Equal Rights*,' wrote Anson Green, 'are written upon our banners ; they must be kept floating in the breeze till the prize be gained.' This motto strongly appealed to the popular mind, but it foreshadowed the involvement of Ryerson and the journal in political controversy. To avoid trenching upon this ground was hardly possible.

In adopting the constitution of the Methodist Episcopal Church the Canadian Connexion took over the plan of a double Conference in the case of the parent Church—Annual and Quadrennial—the business of the second being to control and correlate the work of the numerous annual local Conferences. In Canada the General was a duplication of the Annual Conference, the only difference in its constituency being the exclusion of the junior Ministers. The first (and last) General Conference for Canada met, in 1830, immediately after the Annual Assembly at Belleville. Its main business was to ordain the young Ministers, unusually numerous, who during the last two years had completed their probation. Bishop Hedding attended as a visitor, and performed this office. Case was once more appointed 'General Superintendent' (or President), still remaining—whether by his own preference or otherwise—unordained to the Episcopate, and without the full powers attached to this order in the American Constitution. Probably no other man would have consented to occupy year after year this anomalous *ad interim* position. The whole Church discipline was now carefully revised, and adapted further to local necessities. Philander Smith, whose health had failed, was superannuated, Franklin Metcalf taking over the Presiding Eldership of the Augusta District. The Annual Conference of the next year divided the western District, which had spread through the new settlements along the lakes into the Districts of Niagara and London, of which James Richardson and Ezra Adams were made Presiding Elders, John Ryerson being removed from this quarter to fill the important pulpit of York.

The chief subject of interest at the 1830 Conference was the founding of the projected Academy. After some rivalry between competing localities, *Cobourg* was fixed upon as providing the most suitable site, being central and yet retired and salubrious. A Minister was set aside to travel in the interests of the School ; the Preachers agreed to devote to the



fund for its erection the amount of the *marriage fees* they might receive—a supplement to their scanty income now in prospect which they regarded as a providential windfall!

Early in 1831 George Ryerson was sent to England as representative of an Interdenominational Committee of Religious Liberty recently formed in Canada. The Canadian Conference took the opportunity of sending along with him Peter Jones, with the view of soliciting support for the Canadian Indian Missions. This visit had surprising results. On presenting himself at Hatton Garden, Jones was informed that he could not be allowed to utilize the English missionary platforms for the Canadian Missions; but a grant of £300 on this account was offered him on behalf of the Missionary Society, on condition that he should be at its disposal during his sojourn in the country. To these terms, with some demur, he and George Ryerson consented. Jones, of whom we shall have more to say in Chapter IX., was the son of an Indian mother and an interesting personality—the first convert from a heathen people who had appeared before the Methodist public in England. He had a wonderful story to tell, and told it effectively. His speeches excited great interest up and down the country, and gave a stimulus to the missionary meetings of the year. The heart of British Methodists was touched by the condition of the Red Indians and stirred by the prospect of their conversion. Liberal offers of help for this object came to the Mission House. The British missionary leaders saw a new and promising field opened to them, which, as they judged, the Canadian Church could very imperfectly occupy; the appeal for assistance from England was, in fact, acknowledgement of Canadian insufficiency. Overtures were made accordingly from Hatton Garden, not with the best grace, for the transference of the Indian Missions, and their incorporation in the work of the British Society, which could not consent to grant pecuniary aid without powers of control. At the same time Secretary Townley gave official notice to the Canadian Conference that the British Conference regarded the delimitation of 1820 as no longer in force, since Upper Canada had ceased to belong to the Methodist Episcopal Church, and that the former body held itself free to send Missionaries to any part of the colonies in which it judged them to be needed. He also made inquiries privately from the representative of the British Conference at



Kingston as to openings of this nature in the western province, the correspondence on the subject by some accident becoming matter of public knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

✓ The Canadians were taken aback by this turn of events. The treatment of Jones by the London Committee, its designs upon the Indian Missions, and its denunciation of the treaty of 1820, William Case wrote, 'awakened painful sensations' in the west—the more so because there had been forwarded to the London Mission House, before the arrival of the Canadian emissaries, a full statement of the missionary plans and needs of Methodism in Canada, to which a very different response had been expected. The first impulse of the Canadian Board of Missions was to decline the donation offered by the Missionary Committee in London, and to break off relations with it. Their disquiet was increased by a letter from Robert Alder (Missionary Secretary a little later), written from London in May, 1832, to advise John Ryerson, as President of the Canadian Missionary Society, that the British Missionary Society had

determined to resume work in Upper Canada, and that he, with twelve Missionaries, would in the course of a few days sail from England on this Mission. This announcement [Ryerson continues], and the appointments actually made, were to us like thunderclaps !

The little Canadian Church was just getting on to firm ground, after its troubles due to American entanglements on the one side and Anglican injustice and intrigue on the other, when a British invasion was launched upon it. 'It was easy to predict,' says Ryerson, 'the result of rival Methodist congregations in every town and neighbourhood.' However, the British were coming, and the situation must be faced.

Further information set the proceedings of the London Missionary Committee in a more favourable light. The Canadian leaders resolved to sacrifice their *amour propre* in the interests of the work of God. The thought of conflict with the British Conference was too painful to be contemplated ; the Canadians asked themselves whether *amalgamation* would not be preferable, and whether this was too great a price to

<sup>1</sup> The British Missionary authorities were supposed to be influenced in forming their plans for Canada by the offer of a subsidy for the purpose, which the Government appears to have made as far back as 1828. The Canadian Liberals were suspicious of the political motives of all such grants. Doubtless the Colonial Office desired to strengthen British influences in the province, and was to some degree infected with Strachan's mistrust of the American and Methodist Preachers in Canada.

pay for the powerful reinforcement the parent Society was prepared to send.<sup>1</sup> Peter Jones' report, made on his return from England in June, 1832, gave a pleasing impression of the sentiments of English Methodists toward the work in Canada, which helped to allay the previous misgivings. Guided by John and Egerton Ryerson, the Canadian Board met Robert Alder in a conciliatory spirit, and after some discussion 'articles of settlement were agreed upon.' Alder had already visited the (British) Lower Canada District in May and June (1832); he remained in Upper Canada to meet the Conference there, which assembled at Hallowell (Picton) during the August following. The plans for a British alliance known to be on foot drew a large concourse. Contrary to precedent, the doors of the Conference were thrown open to laymen during the deliberations on the all-important question. After careful elaboration and long discussion, the principle of union was adopted by a three-fourths majority, and it was resolved that the Canadian Methodist Church should adopt the discipline and economy of British Methodism, 'so far as circumstances and prudence will render advisable'; that Episcopacy should be replaced by an annual Presidency after the English pattern, the British Conference being invited to appoint the President for Canada should it see fit to do so; and that the Canadian Missionary Society should become auxiliary to that in England, stationing its Missionaries under the control of the British Committee, and remitting all moneys raised locally to the London Treasurers, while expending through the hands of the Committee appointed by the Canadian Conference the sums allotted to it. These principal resolutions were supplemented by other provisions, more or less consequential, in the direction of conforming American to British Methodist practices. The Annual Conference was immediately followed by a meeting of the General Conference, which gave legal confirmation to the articles of settlement.

Opinion was divided as to how far it was necessary and expedient to submit the plan of union to the Quarterly Meetings of the Connexion; the entire scheme was published in the *Guardian*, and communications were invited from the Societies upon the subject, with a view to guide future deliberations.

<sup>1</sup> As it turned out, Alder brought *three* companions with him to Upper Canada, instead of the promised (or threatened) *twelve*.

The articles which touched upon matters of doctrine or affected the status of Church members were formally referred to the Quarterly Meetings, as required by the Constitution of 1828; these were endorsed by a substantial majority. Laymen had been present in large numbers at the decisive meetings of the Hallowell Conference, and gave every sign of assent short of actual voting; the idea of affiliation to British Methodism was at that time undoubtedly popular throughout the Connexion. The proposals for union were not, however, referred to the judgement of the laity *in toto*; and of this fact advantage was taken subsequently by the dissentient party. The discovery that the British Missionary Society, in view of its proposed work amongst the Indians, had solicited Government grants—the very thing for which the Presbyterians and Ryanites had been denounced in the *Guardian*—disconcerted many Canadian Methodists, who felt their position compromised in the contest against sectarian endowments. Here was an ‘apple of discord’ thrown into the arena while the two Churches were clasping hands—a presage of disruption. The discussion over this incident was not a little disquieting; but the storm subsided for the present, the Canadians being content to signify their mind on the matter of Government subsidies and leaving their British friends free to act on their own responsibility.

Egerton Ryerson, who, with his brother John, to the surprise of many of their friends, had taken a leading part in negotiating the union, was elected representative to the British Conference, charged with the duty of laying the Canadian proposals before it. Courageous as he was, Ryerson accepted the task with confessed trepidation. Alder, who was bent on the success of the plan, wrote to reassure him. ‘There are,’ he said,

no jealousies, no evil surmisings, no ambitious designs in the matter, but a sincere desire to promote the interests of Methodism and the cause of religion in Upper Canada. . . . The Rev. Richard Watson takes a statesmanlike view of the whole case, and will, I am persuaded as will all here at the [Mission House]—meet you with the utmost ingenuousness and liberality. If they be met in a like manner, all will be well.

Ryerson reached England before the Conference of 1833, to find John Beecham the only surviving Secretary at Hatton Garden. Richard Watson had died in the previous winter. He received a hearty welcome. Alder gave a glowing report of his tour, and warmly recommended acceptance of Canada’s



offered hand; the plan of amalgamation was skilfully set forth by its exponent. The British Conference assented, adding only one important proviso to the original conditions, viz. that, in order to facilitate stationing in Canada, a Superintendent of Missions should be appointed from England. This amendment was accepted on the Canadian side; and Joseph Stinson, formerly of Lower Canada, now 'travelling' in England, was designated to this post—a most happy election, as it proved. For the Canadian Presidency George Marsden was chosen; this also a fortunate choice. Marsden was the old-time English gentleman in appearance, dress, and manners—a figure that delighted the colonials. He was a man of saintly spirit and excellent temper, and preached with uncommon unction; along with all this, he was endowed with common sense. That the union so soon miscarried was certainly not the fault of the first English representatives who came to Canada. During Ryerson's absence, James Richardson took over the editorship of the *Guardian*.

The amended Articles of Union were accepted by a full Conference, meeting at York (Toronto) in October, after Egerton Ryerson's return, with but one dissentient voice. The presence of George Marsden, appearing as British President elect, helped to commend the new order. Several Preachers who had doubted hitherto the wisdom of the measure now gave in their adherence. Amongst these was Richardson, who at the conclusion of Conference wrote in the *Guardian* as follows:

When the preliminary arrangements were under consideration, we were not without our fears for the results . . . but we are now free to confess, and happy to find, that our fears were groundless; we are fully satisfied that the best arrangement . . . is made that the respective circumstances of the two Connexions would possibly permit.

The active itinerants were at one with regard to the legislative union. But amongst the Local Preachers, whose discontent had supplied the leverage for Ryan's agitation eight years before, opposition at once declared itself, and assumed a dangerous form. They found leaders in a group of superannuated Ministers of American antecedents, who cherished the antipathy to the British Connexion conceived in the days of the old strife before 1820. These were Joseph Gatchel, present at the 1833 Conference, who had walked out of the



House rather than assent to the union ; David Culp, a man of narrow views and obstinate temper ; Joseph Reynolds, the ablest and most influential of the seceders, who had 'located' many years earlier, and was now a wealthy merchant—he was the first 'Bishop' of the new Connexion, and, though in advanced life, threw himself zealously into its promotion. A number of malcontents who for various reasons had been refused a place in the regular itinerancy, or had been compelled to leave it, joined the rebels. Renouncing fellowship with the transformed Conference, which they charged with treason against the former constitution, the dissentients held their first assembly in June, 1834, assuming the title of 'The Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada,' and claiming in that name the property vested in the Church they had left. Law-suits followed, in which the legality of the constitutional change effected was vindicated. A year later the new organization mustered a Church membership of 1,243, with a staff of 21 Ministers. The strife between the two Churches was angry, and brought obloquy on the Methodist name. Several of the leaders in the secession had been previously opposed to Episcopacy, which now they espoused, as it seemed, in order to secure a legal handle against their former colleagues. On the other hand, they reproached Egerton Ryerson in particular with tergiversation ; since his visit to England he had assumed a more conservative tone in the *Guardian* ; he was accused of having 'gone over to Dr. Strachan, press, types, and all !'

The Conference of 1833 reported a membership of 16,000 for Upper Canada—an increment of 60 per cent. made during the five years of independence. Nearly a thousand Indians were included in this total. There were seventy-three itinerants on the Stations ; eight more were requested from England. Twenty-one young Preachers stood before Marsden for ordination,<sup>1</sup> the number which had accumulated since Bishop Hedding last officiated in this way.

The assimilation of American to British usage, carried out in the Circuits after the settlement of 1833, was attended inevitably with some local disturbance and with a certain amount of loss. The Conference of the next year showed a shrinkage of more than 1,000 in the Church membership—

<sup>1</sup> It pleased some of the sticklers for American Episcopacy to learn that Dr. Coke had conveyed 'orders' to George Marsden in 1813, before he sailed for India.

about the number drawn away by the Episcopal reaction—notwithstanding sporadic symptoms of revival and a hopeful ingathering of new converts. The Quarterly Visitation of Classes and Quarterly Membership Schedules were introduced from England, and the powers of the Superintendent Minister were enlarged; the Presiding Elder was transformed into a District Chairman, and ceased to conduct the Quarterly Meetings of the Circuits; the yearly renewal of the Covenant was instituted (a practice, however, discontinued later). But the American institutions of the camp-meeting and the protracted meetings, and the old Wesleyan observance of the occasional watch-night (in England confined by this time to the New Year's season) continued in vogue.

The question of the status of the Local Preachers remained a stumbling-block. A number of these brethren were due for ordination according to the former American usage of Canada; some of them should have been ordained earlier, but for the lack of a Bishop. They applied to the Conference of 1834 for admission to orders on the basis of the articles of union, which guaranteed 'the rights and privileges of the Canadian Preachers.' The President-designate, Edmund Grindrod, who was appointed Marsden's successor, had not arrived from England when the Conference opened; and Robert Alder, his *locum tenens*, after some demur, admitted the plea of the applicants, which Grindrod on his arrival peremptorily rejected, insisting that men engaged in secular business could not promise to 'lay aside the study of the world.' To many Grindrod's action appeared a breach of faith, and the new President did not possess the mild temper which softens a rebuff—Grindrod failed to make himself *persona grata* in Canada, as Marsden had done. In this difficulty Franklin Metcalf proposed that, to spare Grindrod's scruples, Case, ex-President, should be empowered to ordain the expectants. William Ryerson in reply contended that a collision with the Local Preachers on this question was inevitable, and had better be faced at once. He therefore proposed that such ordinations should now cease, as being 'contrary to the principles and practice of the venerable founder of Methodism,' and both unnecessary and inexpedient 'in the altered circumstances' of the Connexion; this motion the majority of the Conference accepted. The multiplication

of the regular ministry had certainly gone far to remove the previous necessity for the administration of the Sacraments by lay Preachers. Nevertheless the action of the Conference was felt as a painful blow by many zealous and devoted servants of the Gospel, though mitigated by the reception of several of the excluded men into the ministry.<sup>1</sup> But this unfortunate occurrence, aggravated by the abolition of the Local Preachers' Conference consequent on the union with British Methodism, widened the breach that had arisen in Canada between the ordained and the lay ministry, and tended to the depreciation and decay of the latter order.

Before the middle of the thirties a political agitation shook the province from end to end, which could not fail to disturb Canadian Methodism. Letters appeared in the Canadian press written by Joseph Hume, the well-known English Radical politician, advocating colonial independence after the example of the United States, and denouncing 'the baneful domination of the mother country.' The loyalty to Great Britain so conspicuous twenty years earlier had been impaired by the illiberal policy of the provincial Government and the feud which it kept up with the popular House of Assembly, especially on Church matters. Hume's letters sowed the seed of the rebellion which broke out in 1837, under the leadership of Papineau in Lower Canada and Mackenzie in Upper Canada. Enlisted as it had been in the campaign against Anglican pretensions, Methodism could not keep clear of the fray. The *Guardian*, whose reputation had been made by Egerton Ryerson, was at this time the most popular journal in Upper Canada; its editor was pointedly assailed in the controversy evoked by Hume's letters. The Conference of 1834 formally reprobated this attack, and passed a resolution of loyalty to the British crown. An exciting political election ensued in the autumn, yielding a majority to the House of Assembly more bent than ever on democratic reform. In face of this demonstration the Executive gave a new and larger slice of property from the Clergy Reserve Fund to the Church of England, whose adherents were still far from numerous, as if to enrich its friends while it had the power.<sup>2</sup> This proceeding raised

<sup>1</sup> Local Preachers already ordained retained their prerogative.

<sup>2</sup> The victory of Liberalism signaled by the passing of the Reform Bill in 1832 sounded the death-warrant of Tory rule in the colonies. The Canadian endowment scheme of 1834 was, in fact, squashed by the home Government.



indignation to a fever point. Editor Ryerson was in an awkward position. Attempting to steer a middle course, he fell into disfavour with both parties. The Conference of 1834 by a large majority had superseded Ryerson in the editorial chair of the *Guardian* by its Secretary, James Richardson, a pronounced Liberal. On Richardson's declining the office, Ryerson was re-elected; he appeared to be indispensable. His aim at this juncture seems to have been to bring about an understanding amongst Churches and parties in Canada, by which an equitable settlement of the Clergy Reserves property might be secured under the auspices of the British Colonial Office. But political animosity just then ran too high for any such concordat, and the strife showed no abatement during the following year.

The Conference of 1835, over which William Lord presided in place of Grindrod, who had returned to England ill, like that before it, found the Church almost at a standstill in its numerical returns, notwithstanding the activity and popularity of its leaders and the continued revivals of religion which visited the Circuits here and there. The dissatisfaction of the Local Preachers, and of others who felt themselves aggrieved by the new regulations, contributed to this arrest of progress; but its chief cause lay in the political distraction of the country.<sup>1</sup> The Conference elected Ryerson once more as its Secretary, for he retained the general confidence of his brethren; but the politics of the *Guardian* came in for severe criticism at the hands of Richardson and Metcalf, the recognized 'Liberal' leaders,<sup>2</sup> and Ryerson yielded the editorship to Ephraim Evans,

<sup>1</sup> In addition to other troubles, Irvingism, imported from England, and Mormonism, from the States, were both infesting the Societies with damaging effects. Resolutions were passed declaring that the Canadian Conference had 'no' interest in grants made to religious bodies' and that it 'pronounced no judgement on the matter' of State-endowment, to which it profited from the grants received for Canadian objects by the Missionary Society in England. The Canadian Methodists grew more and more uneasy about these subsidies, which certainly were not worth to the Missionary Society what they cost it in the disapproval and damaging criticism earned by them in the colony.

<sup>2</sup> Franklin Metcalf took umbrage at the application of the closure to his speech in this debate. President Lord was impatient of long discussion, and showed a brusqueness in his ruling which hurt deliberate debaters. 'Come, brethren, we must get on,' he would break in; 'remember the Circuits are vacant!' Multiplying the days of Conference by the number of Preachers present, he would conclude: 'So many days lost to our pastoral work!' The above incident was understood to have hastened the superannuation of this valuable Minister, which took place at this Conference; but his health had been much impaired. Richardson withdrew after another year of labour, declaring himself 'no longer at home' in the Conference. His original misgivings about the amalgamation with British Methodism were revived by the course of events.



who was regarded as a 'safe' man. The fact was that Egerton Ryerson saw religion involved at almost every point of colonial politics; and he could not write otherwise than in a pungent and vivacious style, irritating to those who disagreed with him. Lord, the President, held himself aloof from party questions, being, in fact, too preoccupied with religion to think of them. He was indefatigable in travelling and preaching, devoting himself particularly and with best effect, assisted by Stinson and Case, to stimulating popular interest in Missions to the heathen.

The Conference of 1836, held at Belleville under the Presidency (for the last time) of William Lord, was peaceful in the absence of Egerton Ryerson, the storm-centre of debate, who was occupied in England on the business of the Cobourg Academy, now near completion; but its quiet 'partook of the stillness of death.' Metcalf had retired; Richardson was on the point of doing so. So sensitive was this Assembly on the subject of politics that it was at a loss for an acceptable Secretary, most of the eligible men 'having been more or less compromised on public questions'; finally Case was chosen, with Ephraim Evans to assist him. The Conference was much embarrassed by its custom of presenting an address to the incoming Lieutenant-Governor. The newly appointed representative of the Crown had plunged into violent disputes with the House of Assembly, making himself extremely and deservedly unpopular; besides, he had behaved offensively toward the Methodist Church in the matter of the Indian Missions. The loyal address, notwithstanding, was forthcoming, drawn up in terms colourless enough, apart from the clause which urged 'a speedy and satisfactory disposition of the lands set apart for the support of the Protestant clergy.' This reluctant action of the Conference, however, gave huge offence to many Liberal Methodists, some of them borrowing from the policy of Parliament towards the Executive the cry, 'Stop the supplies!'

The brethren who had set up a rival organization [writes Carroll] reaped a great deal more advantage from the political cry than from any prejudice in favour of Episcopacy or the ordination of Local Preachers.

It is not surprising that the Church membership of 1836 showed again a shrinkage. Upper Canada was now divided

into five Methodist Districts, and Ezra Healey—one of the few survivors of the old 'American' staff, a portly, rubicund, genial figure, and an exceptionally able Preacher and administrator—was put into the Chairmanship vacated by Richardson.

The Cobourg Academy was opened during the ensuing Connexional year, and Matthew Richey was brought from the eastern provinces to be made its Principal. Its erection left the Trustees' Board saddled with a debt of £41,000, and application was made to the colonial Parliament for a grant to this amount—a sum not disproportionate to the contributions that had been made to other denominational Colleges from the land-reserves earmarked for purposes of higher education. The Lower House voted the grant unanimously; but the Bill to this effect was thrown out by the Upper House, advised by the Lieutenant-Governor. The refusal was overruled by Lord Glenelg, Minister for the Colonies in England, and a Royal Charter was secured to the new institution, Egerton Ryerson conducted the negotiations on this matter with a skill that enhanced his influence.

William Martin Harvard presided, by appointment from England, over the Conference of 1837, held at Toronto<sup>1</sup>; Egerton Ryerson was restored to the Secretary's chair. Once more a diminished membership was reported from the Circuits. This Conference entered into a full discussion of the vexed questions of the Clergy Reserves and Government subventions. The Conference was resolved to clear its conscience once for all upon this subject. A string of resolutions was eventually passed affirming that the grants in question had been received in aid of Missions to the Indians and destitute settlers in Canada by the British Missionary Society; that the Canadian Conference was no party to the transaction, nor had its Ministers received any emolument from this source; that such grants had been made by authority of the English Government at different times to Missionary Societies working in British North America generally, and had terminated in the year 1835; that the Canadian Methodist Conference, for its own part, disapproved of the subsidizing of religious bodies in the colonies where public opinion was opposed to every kind and degree of

<sup>1</sup> Harvard, in contrast with his predecessor, was a mild Moderator, and gave a free rein to debate! He was blamed for letting his Conference run too long!

religious establishment by the State, particularly deprecating the distribution of such bounties in Upper Canada as prejudicing the equitable settlement of the long-standing dispute over the Clergy Reserve Lands. The Conference further urged on the Legislature a prompt dealing with the matter last-named, and expressed regret that the Presbyterian had associated itself with the Anglican Church in seeking a privileged position on the basis of this property. This full and outspoken declaration, in whose lines Egerton Ryerson's hand is clearly traceable, set Methodism right with public opinion in Canada; but it was not relished by Conservative Wesleyans in England. At the Conference of 1836 Henry Wilkinson was made Chairman of the Augusta District—a man of the most ardent zeal, 'whose labours,' it is said, 'were herculean and his popularity at this time unbounded.' Wilkinson's whole mind was given to the spiritual work of the Church, and his leadership stemmed the tide of reaction on this side of Upper Canada.

In the winter of 1837-38 the armed rebellion broke out (in the military sense a complete fiasco), which brought the political turmoil of Canada to a crisis.<sup>1</sup> The storm cleared the air. The several parties involved in the tangle of colonial affairs now came out in their true light; the Methodists, however 'Liberal' in their sympathies, were found law-abiding almost to a man. President Harvard was ill advised enough<sup>2</sup> to issue to the Superintendents a circular directing them to inquire in all their Societies for any who had acted or spoken seditiously in connexion with the rebellion. The effect of this communication, which found its way into print and excited great resentment in the rank and file of the membership, might have been calamitous had not Egerton Ryerson promptly countered it by a public letter traversing its implications. Only one Minister attempted to act on the instructions given. Its chief effect was to destroy Harvard's influence in the country.

I regard this as the point [says Carroll] at which the antagonism began between the leading Canadian members of Conference and the authorities representing British Methodism in the province, which . . . issued in the break-up of the union.

<sup>1</sup> Anson Green gives a clear account of its causes and meaning in pp. 212-16 of his *Life and Times*.

<sup>2</sup> Under instructions from England, it was suspected, but this apprehension is unsupported by evidence.



Egerton Ryerson had been at one time intimate with several of the leading rebels, and the outbreak cast a cloud on his reputation. When, however, it appeared that he had warned his old friends against their perilous course, and striven to divert them from it, his conduct appeared in a different light. His brilliant and generous defence of a public man who had been wrongfully charged with complicity in the rebellion, and expelled the country,<sup>1</sup> raised him to a higher pitch of popularity than ever; he was rehabilitated in the eyes of the colonial Liberals. The interference was censured, indeed, at the ensuing Conference (1838) by those who came to be known as the 'British' party; but the majority enthusiastically endorsed his action, and re-elected him both Conference Secretary and editor of the *Guardian*. His moderation as well as his boldness was recognized; he was regarded on all hands as the foremost 'champion of civil liberty and religious equality' in British North America. Methodism had in Upper Canada to bear the brunt of an insidious and long-sustained attack on the principles of ecclesiastical liberty, the nature of which appears to have been imperfectly understood in England; to Egerton Ryerson, above all others, the defeat of this conspiracy was due.

A rearrangement of boundaries was effected at this Conference; the Niagara District disappeared, its Circuits being divided between Toronto (East) and London (West); under Wilkinson's stimulating leadership the Augusta District had prospered so much that the northern part of it was now formed into a separate area, under the name of Ottawa (later Bytown) District. The Ottawa valley was attracting a host of settlers, and growing into the importance subsequently marked by the designation of the city of Ottawa as the capital of the Canadian dominion. After the events of the last year Harvard, though universally respected, found his position in the Conference chair far from agreeable; he laid down his office and withdrew to Lower Canada. The Conference requested the appointment of Joseph Stinson for its new President; to this nomination the British authorities assented. The Ryerson brothers were now all stationed at Toronto, William as Superintendent of the Circuit, John as Book Steward and Chairman of the District,

<sup>1</sup> This was the Hon. Marshal S. Bidwell, a gentleman who had treated Ryerson with open contempt as a deserter from the Liberal ranks.



and Egerton as *Guardian* editor. The secession of 1834 had now spent its original force, and the work of the Connexion proceeded with renewed vigour, yielding a general increase of Church membership during the ensuing year.

But the rift that had opened between British and Canadian Methodist opinion, instead of closing, widened from the time of the 1838 Conference. Robert Alder,<sup>1</sup> now established as Missionary Secretary in London, was visiting America in the interests of the approaching Centenary celebration of Wesleyan Methodism. He was instructed, at the same time, to represent to the Canada Conference the views of the Missionary Society, and to effect a settlement of the matters in dispute—the British Missionary Committee was understood to see Canadian affairs through his eyes. Alder's conservative, not to say aristocratic, leanings were well known; he came intending, it was supposed, to give a quietus to the *Guardian*, to repress 'agitation,' and 'to bring the Canadian body into a great state of submission to the parent Conference.' How far these reports were justified one cannot say; it was at any rate unfortunate that a man credited with such a policy should have been the official British representative at this crisis. It was patent that Alder and Ryerson, the two men who had brought about the union of 1833, were completely at issue as to the present situation. Arriving at Toronto in the spring of 1839, Alder held a consultation with leading Ministers there, which proved abortive; if he had come with the aims imputed to him, a formidable task confronted him—Canadian Methodists were prepared 'to think, write, and speak with manly independence.' About the same date a letter was published that had been addressed from the Missionary Society in London to the Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada,<sup>2</sup> in which Alder's hand was seen, distinctly favouring Anglican claims upon State support. This letter was roundly censured in the *Guardian*, and vindicated by Alder in the same columns.

Are you sure [rejoined the editor with his usual frankness] that you are called of God to make Methodism an agency for the promotion of a national establishment in this new country in the teeth of an overwhelming majority of the inhabitants? Are you warranted in insisting

<sup>1</sup> This distinguished visitor received from the (Methodist) Middletown University a Doctorate of Divinity in the United States.

<sup>2</sup> This was Sir George Arthur, who was appointed after the rebellion—on the whole a fair-minded man.

that 'under no circumstances' the principle of an Establishment shall be abandoned? Mr. Wesley and his co-adjutors left their deliberate judgement that 'there is no instance of, nor any ground at all for, a National Establishment in the New Testament.' . . . How can any true Wesleyan convert that into a matter of faith, for which 'there is no instance in the New Testament'? His Excellency stated some months since that he had written for you to come to this country. They think they (the Strachan clique) can bargain with you on more advantageous terms than they can with the Methodist Conference in this province.

So the battle was joined. When the Conference met, the Liberal party was found to be completely in the ascendant. Dr. Alder succeeded in getting certain of the resolutions of 1837 rescinded, which appeared to trench on the responsibilities of the British Conference for the missionary grants; but on the main question, affecting the right and duty of the Canadian Conference to deal with the subject of the Clergy Reserve Fund and Church Establishment, he was defeated by a majority of 55 to 5. Ryerson was re-elected to the editorship by an all but unanimous vote, against Alder's protest. A strong mixed Committee was appointed to guard the interests of the Church during the year; and Egerton Ryerson was deputed to visit England, if need should arise, to represent Canadian views on the matter of the Clergy Reserves. Alder accepted his defeat with good temper, and all parties took up warmly his proposals for the Centenary Commemoration. The *Guardian* wrote of him in conciliatory, even complimentary, terms. It was hoped that peace would be restored, that the position of Canadian Methodism would be better understood in England, and that Britishers and colonials would shake hands over the Centenary.

But this happy issue was not to be realized. Dr. Alder remained for some time in Canada, fraternizing with the Anglican opponents of Methodism in a way which revived the misgivings of his brethren. The subsequent course of events goes to show that the British leaders had already made up their minds to a dissolution of the union—'a purpose of which,' writes Carroll, 'the colonials had little or no inkling.' The Canadian Conference of 1840 met in early summer cheerfully, gladdened by a substantial addition to its membership and by the success of the Centenary celebration throughout the Districts. Responsible government was about to be

granted to the colony, and the newly appointed Lieutenant-Governor, the Right Hon. Charles Poulett Thompson,<sup>1</sup> had shown himself a man of liberal spirit and open mind, bringing a new atmosphere into public affairs. A settlement of the Clergy Reserves Fund was in prospect which, if not altogether satisfactory to Nonconformists, would at any rate put an end to this long embittered contention, and would terminate the attempts of the Church of England to secure an unjust ascendancy. Everything in Canada seemed to be making for peace and goodwill.

Meanwhile the Alder-Ryerson duel had been renewed across the water. Lord Sydenham happened to forward to the Colonial Secretary in England, in explanation of the judgement at which he had arrived in the matter of Church endowment, a letter written to himself by Egerton Ryerson, whom he had consulted along with other leading Canadians. The contents of this masterly letter, which was communicated to the Mission House, incensed Dr. Alder and through him the Missionary Committee, which was already perturbed by Alder's report of the doings in Canada. That Committee forthwith passed resolutions of severe reproach against Ryerson, in every line of which (says Anson Green) Dr. Alder's hand was visible, charging him (amongst other offences) with traversing the rights of the Missionary Committee by correspondence with the Government! Instead of referring their complaints to the Canadian Conference for inquiry, the Committee drew up a censure on its own authority, requiring the Canadian Conference to proceed judicially in the case, on pain of dissolution of the union. To this demand, as could only be expected, the Canadian Ministers declined to accede; the vote of censure on Ryerson, proposed by Matthew Richey, was rejected by a majority of 59 to 8. Further, the Conference appointed William and Egerton Ryerson its delegates to the approaching British Conference (of 1840), along with President Stinson,

<sup>1</sup> This gentleman was shortly afterwards appointed the first Governor-General of Canada, under the title of Lord Sydenham, and the carrying out of the policy of colonial administration initiated by the memorable report of Lord Durham was entrusted to him. His early death, in 1841, caused universal sorrow in the colonies. 'Canada lost her brightest ornament,' writes Anson Green, 'and the Wesleyan Church one of her most powerful friends. He found us in darkness, and brought us forth to light. He found Canada in ruins . . . and led us forth to contentment, prosperity, and peace.' Lord Sydenham was, in fact, the first Governor of Upper Canada to emancipate himself from 'the Family Compact,' which had for long been strangling Canadian aspirations.



whose sympathies were decidedly British. The Delegates conveyed a respectful address expressing

deep regret that any diversity of opinion should threaten the harmony and cordial co-operation of the British and Canadian Conferences . . . and the hope of a permanent settlement.

The Canadians could not yet believe that separation was intended.

Before the British Conference met at Newcastle-on-Tyne, Dr. Alder had replied to Lord Sydenham in a letter addressed to the Colonial Secretary, making statements which the Ryersons affirmed to be 'incorrect and reflecting unbecomingly, both on the Methodist Episcopal Church and on the Canadian Conference.' The two brothers had a chilling reception in Newcastle; Egerton's appearance as representative under the circumstances was spoken of as a violation of all courtesy and propriety. After a brief examination<sup>1</sup> in Committee, the Canadian question came on for decision late, in a depleted house. The Committee's report<sup>2</sup> prescribed conditions which, as the Delegates declared, the Canadian Conference could never accept, since they were contrary to the articles of union, and calculated to reduce that Conference to a merely subordinate position. The demand that 'the Canadian brethren should support the right of the Home Committee to the grant-in-aid for the Indian Missions, even if paid from the Clergy Reserves Fund, and that the *Christian Guardian* should be 'required' to admit and maintain 'the duty of civil governments to employ their influences, and a portion of their resources, for the support of the Christian religion,' was to call on the Canadian Methodists to stultify themselves and to repudiate the contention they had publicly made for twenty years past. No one acquainted with the history of Canadian Methodism would dream of offering such suggestions—so the Delegates pleaded. It was felt, after this reply, to be useless to urge compliance farther, and the British Conference terminated the union there and then.

A second Conference for this year was summoned in Canada.

<sup>1</sup> The matter was not brought forward in Conference, nor the Committee appointed, until toward the end of the session.

<sup>2</sup> See the *Minutes of Conference* for 1840.



The Ryersons on the one side, and Stinson and Richey<sup>1</sup> on the other, had issued pamphlets on their return relating what had happened in England. This sorrowful assembly met at Toronto in October. Case was voted to the chair. The discussions were held in open session. For the bulk of the Canadian ministry and people, the result was a foregone conclusion ; the door had been sternly shut upon the colonials by the mother Conference. There was, however, a strong minority in favour of submission ; in the end *eleven* of the Preachers present threw in their lot with British Methodism. Dislike of the Ryerson ascendancy, and disapproval of Egerton Ryerson's constant meddling in politics, actuated some of the dissentients' feelings, shared by others who, on the principles involved, voted for colonial rights. Amongst the eleven were numbered not only Stinson and Richey and the two Evanses (Ephraim and James), but, to every one's surprise, Father Case—American of the Americans. Case's heart was wrapped up in the Indian Missions, for whose main support he had learnt to look to the parent Church, which had treated the cause he loved with great liberality—no branch of Missions was more popular in England than that carried on amongst the red men ; he felt bound in gratitude to take the British side. Most of the Indian Mission staff went with him, although some of them in point of judgement were convinced colonials. Discussing William Case's attitude, Egerton Ryerson remarked :

If the view that God had given the people in Canada to the Canadian Preachers, but the heathen tribes to the British Conference, had been acted upon by the Committee in London, no collision or misunderstanding would have arisen.

By far the greater part of the Preachers of British origin cast their vote on the colonial side.

'The final leave-taking' is said by those who witnessed it to have been 'very tender and sorrowful.' It was a parting of men who had shared all the intimacies of Methodist fellowship, who had been companions in toil and peril through many a campaign. The rupture in most instances left mutual respect and affection but little impaired ; the pathos of the farewell

<sup>1</sup> Matthew Richey obtained leave, on grounds of health, to visit England in the previous summer, and appeared by Stinson's side, opposing the Ryersons, at Newcastle.

gave an earnest of ultimate reunion. Commenting on the result nearly forty years later, Anson Green, who had several times visited England, writes :

Many of the English Ministers who took strong ground against us lived long enough to see and acknowledge that we were right in the matter. The next decade opened their eyes wonderfully,<sup>1</sup> and now I know of but one man in the home Conference who does not heartily approve of our opposition to a State Church in Canada. Dr. Bunting, the wisest of them all, lived to see and acknowledge that our course was right, and no man did more honour to us in the end.

Green sided with the British on two points : (1) the Canadians, he argued, had no right to interfere with the Missionary Society in its receipt of Government grants ; (2) the *Guardian* newspaper had habitually trespassed on political ground. But, as against the British contention, he held that the Clergy Reserve Fund was a strictly local matter, with which the British Conference had no business to meddle, and that the Canadian Conference was bound to resist at all points the establishment of a colonial State Church. This judgement expressed the mind of most moderate men in the colony.

The people stood by the Canadian Conference. When, a year later, losses and gains came to be counted, it was found that the colonial Church had lost no more than 1,250 members by the separation. In spite of this diminution, it had grown by the increment of 663. The new British District formed out of the seceders claimed a membership of close upon 1,500. The total strength of the Societies under the care of the Canadian Conference at this date was just over 17,000—a figure 1,000 larger than that reached in 1833. The entire constituency of the now separated Churches showed an advance of but 12½ per cent. as the gain realized in the eight years since amalgamation—a growth which had fallen behind that of the population. There existed all the while an underlying antagonism of principle, called into play by the political strife of the colony, which caused continual and hurtful friction. Satisfactory progress thus became impossible, and a breach opened which quickly rent the Church in twain. The amalgamation of 1833 was brought about by motives of policy more than by affinity and heart-affection. Two

<sup>1</sup> This is a reference to the Puseyite movement in the Church of England, which more than anything else has estranged Methodism from the old Church.

men to whom it was chiefly due cherished views and aims which the course of events developed and sharpened into vehement antagonism.

The premature union with British Methodism had cost Canadian Methodism, which was of American origin, two schisms, first on the anti-British and then on the pro-British side. Amid the distress of the year 1840 it was a good omen that the earliest secession antecedent to these two—the movement headed by Henry Ryan in 1827—now came to an end. The little 'Wesleyan Methodist Church of Canada' was dissolved at this date, four of its best Ministers, with many Church members, seeking admission to the parent Communion.

The one great benefit which accrued to the Church in Canada through British Methodist connexion was the impetus given to the Indian Missions. These were multiplied and made efficient in the years 1833-40 to an extent far beyond what colonial Methodism could have achieved unaided. This sacred interest kept the parted brethren in touch with each other; it softened their antagonism, and helped graciously to draw them to fellowship.

## IX

### THE GOSPEL AMONGST THE RED MEN

The Pilgrim Fathers and the American Indians—John Eliot—Romanist Missionaries—William Case and the Credit River Indians—Alvin Torrey, first Missionary to Indians—Peter Jones and John Sunday—Remarkable Changes in Indian Habit and Custom—Anglican Manœuvres—Statistics of 1828—A typical Camp-Meeting—Alderville—The Hudson Bay Company—Literature for Indians—Influence of Boarding and Industrial Schools—Dr. Enoch Wood—The Boethuks—The Esquimaux.

THE North American Indians were the objects of the earliest of all modern English movements toward the conversion of the heathen. The Pilgrim Fathers adopted the salvation of the American savages as a part of their colonial programme. The Royal Charter granted to the Massachusetts Company at its formation in 1628 expressly laid down

that the people from England may be so religiously, peaceably, and civilly governed, as their good life and orderly conversation may incite the Natives of the country to the knowledge and obedience of the only true God and Saviour of mankind and the Christian faith.

The seal of the company bore for its device an Indian, with the words in his mouth: 'Come over and help us!' In view of the subsequent fate of the American Indians, this missionary motto reads like a ghastly irony.

At first the Pilgrim Fathers disposed themselves in a very friendly manner toward the Natives, and treated them with justice and kindness; but when, mainly through the fault of other settlers, feuds arose in which the Indians perpetrated great atrocities, they took to arms, moved not only by the thought of the solidarity of interests of the settlers, but by the idea that God had given them the land for their possession—that the Natives were the Canaanites, who must be exterminated. . . . The war against the Indians was in their eyes a holy war—a prelude to the tragic history of the dealings of the white man with his red brother.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See *Warneck's History of Protestant Missions*, pp. 47, 48.



The United States Government has indeed for many years past pursued a humane and well-intentioned policy toward the remnant of the aborigines in its dominions; but their general condition at the present time is a heavy reproach to Christian civilization.

There are bright spots, however, in the melancholy record of the struggle between colonists and Natives in North America. John Eliot, a Cambridge scholar, the pastor of Roxbury, in New England, took in good earnest the missionary vow of the Pilgrim Fathers. He set himself when forty-two years of age, to seek the conversion of the heathen around him, and for nearly half a century (1640-90) pursued this task with apostolic zeal and wisdom, and through much sorrow and sacrifice. He learnt to preach in the Native language, and translated the whole Bible into it. He raised up an Indian Christian community of 3,600 people, orderly, thriving, and contented, growing into intelligence and civilization; but this garden of the Lord, redeemed from the wilderness, was trampled down before Eliot's death. In the end Eliot's churches were broken up by war and deportation; the tribes he had evangelized were destroyed, and his Bible translations were rendered useless through the disappearance of their language.<sup>1</sup>

Eliot's enterprise, however, stirred the conscience of the Massachusetts Government, which in 1646 directed that the provincial Church should set apart two ordained Ministers to preach the Gospel to the Indians; and the report of it excited uncommon interest and sympathy in England, where the Puritan movement was in its flood-tide. Some seventy English and Scottish Ministers signed a petition addressed to the Long Parliament, then in session, praying that measures should be taken 'for the extension of the Gospel in America and the West Indies.' The Parliament answered this appeal by issuing in 1648, a manifesto, which by its command was to be read in all the churches of the country, calling the attention of all Christian people to the missionary duty, and enjoining contributions to be made toward this object. Oliver Cromwell was a missionary enthusiast. He appears to have had a vision of Britain as Christ's witness to the whole world and the centre of an evangelical agency covering the four continents;

<sup>1</sup> A special difficulty of missionary work in this field lies in the great diversity of language amongst the Red Indian tribes or 'nations,' and in the unstable condition of the several languages themselves.

he even planned to make Christian Missions a department of State, and elaborated a scheme for a Protestant 'Congregatio de Propaganda Fide' designed to counterwork that of Rome<sup>1</sup>—a project which lapsed with Cromwell's death and the overthrow of the Commonwealth. In 1649 there was formed, more privately, a Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England, which gathered a considerable fund. This corporation still exists under the title of the 'New England Company,' applying the proceeds of its endowments to the support of Missions to the Indians in Canada. At the middle of the seventeenth century England seemed on the way to become a thoroughly missionary country. The reaction of 1660 changed the spiritual outlook, and threw back religious progress for nigh a century.

So long as they were in power, the Quaker colonists who founded the State of Pennsylvania in 1682, under William Penn's leadership, treated their Indian neighbours in a Christian fashion,<sup>2</sup> but they do not appear to have spread Christianity widely amongst them. Amongst the sporadic efforts made in this direction during the eighteenth century, the work of David Brainerd (1743-47) is the most notable.<sup>3</sup> This devoted and able man, who died at twenty-nine, brought a body of converted Indians from the New Jersey and Delaware States and planted them on an agricultural settlement, where spiritual and social redemption were pursued together. Brainerd's experiment, alas, went the way of other endeavours to save this hapless people; the greed and treachery of the white man drove the red man from his ancestral lands ever farther west, and hardened him more and more against his oppressor. John Wesley came to Georgia a few years earlier than Brainerd, with a view to evangelize the heathen; but he was

<sup>1</sup> The Roman Congregation (or Committee) for Propagating the Faith was instituted by Gregory XV in 1623; and its decrees were declared to have the force of apostolic constitutions. A College for the education of Missionaries was opened at Rome four years later. This body has been the right arm of the Papacy in the extension of its power in schismatic and heathen countries.

<sup>2</sup> Voltaire observed that Penn's agreement with the Native 'is the only treaty between Indians and Christians which was not confirmed by an oath, and was never broken.' Another historian testifies that while elsewhere the colonists massacred and were massacred, 'no drop of Quaker blood was ever shed by the hand of an Indian in the territory of Pennsylvania.'

<sup>3</sup> Brainerd was an agent of the Scottish Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, founded in 1701. His *Life*, written by Jonathan Edwards, the famous New England divine, bore rich fruit in England; the missionary flame was kindled in the breast of William Carey of Samuel Marsden, and of Henry Martyn, at that source.

compelled to return to England without being able even to begin the fulfilment of his cherished purpose. The Moravians, always ready to undertake the forlorn hopes of Christendom, planted Missions in several places amongst the American Indians, with promising results, which were invariably blighted by the corrupting influence and the faithless and ruthless encroachments of the white settlers.

At the time when Methodism, after years of propagation in the United States, crossed the border into Canada, it had come but little into contact with the Indian population. In the countries both north and south of the St. Lawrence its energies were for thirty years absorbed in evangelizing the European colonists scattered over vast areas, for whose souls there were few beside to care ; the first Methodists of this region were settlers who spread their religion out of concern for their neighbours' souls. In Canada the French Romanist priesthood, and especially the Jesuit Order, had for more than a century prosecuted vigorous Missions amongst the red men, and had won notable success. While Protestant Churches were half asleep, Rome was busy sowing in this important field her seed of tares mingled with the Gospel wheat. Her Missionaries did much to protect the Natives from colonial rapacity ; to their efforts must be attributed, to no small extent, the beginnings of the more humane policy toward the Indian tribes pursued in British North America, and the greater success there attained in their reclamation. On the whole Canada has maintained a tradition of goodwill and fair-play between white and red, which, in spite of many wrongs and violences, has brought the races into freer intercourse, and has made missionary work more practicable and more stable than farther south.

The pioneer Preachers in Upper Canada within ten years of their coming began to plan for the Christianization of the Indian Natives. This movement originated simultaneously at several remote spots ; the nature of the country and the lines of settlement, running to immense lengths along the great river-arteries, were such as to bring colonists and Natives into contact at innumerable points. At the opening of the nineteenth century a certain Welshman of the name of Augustus Jones, a provincial surveyor under the Government, lived near Burlington Heights, which stand at the head of Lake Ontario, between the town of Hamilton and the Credit River on the



north-east. His work brought him into friendly intercourse with the Indians, and he married a chief's daughter belonging to the Mississauga tribe of the Ojibway nation. One day in the year 1801 Joseph Sawyer, when preaching at Stoney Creek, noticed this woman present in his congregation along with her husband, and listening with unmistakable interest. Sawyer sought an interview with the couple. The upshot was that in a short time they both applied for baptism, bringing with them a bright Indian lad about eight years old, a relative of Mrs. Jones, who was baptized along with themselves, and received the name of the Minister.<sup>1</sup> Sawyer found it impossible, for lack of means and equipment, to carry farther at the time this beginning; the seed sown in the hearts of Augustus Jones' Indian family was destined to bear rich fruit thereafter. William Case, subsequently the director of the Canadian-Indian Missions, travelled the Ancaster Circuit in 1808, and came into contact with the Credit River Indians, to whose conversion his heart was drawn. Though little at present could be done for them, the fragments of the Gospel they had heard were working in their nature. The story of Nathan Bangs's preaching (in 1803) to the company gathered for an Indian frolic has been told in Chapter VI. The effect of this encounter cannot be traced, except so far as it stirred the heart of Bangs himself, and set him, and others through him, on the way to seek the salvation of the wild Indian people.

Somewhat later a pathetic incident occurring not far from the Bay of Quinte strongly excited the interest of the Methodists of that District in the salvation of the heathen wanderers on their borders, whom, as they confessed, they had regarded as little more capable of Christian faith than the beasts that perish. One winter's night a small party of these outcasts crept unnoticed, for the sake of warmth, into the room where a Methodist prayer-meeting was going on. Only snatches of what they heard said or sung were intelligible to them; yet the scene, and the impressions of the hour, so much affected them that their emotion became uncontrollable. The Methodists at last observed their fellow worshippers, and were soon convinced that the uninvited strangers were under some

<sup>1</sup> This boy, who became Chief Sawyer of the Credit, was the first Ojibway Indian to receive Protestant baptism in Canada. He was converted to God shortly prior to 1825, and was greatly instrumental in the evangelization of his people, becoming a pillar of Methodism amongst them.



powerful influence of the Spirit of God. This 'sign'—miraculous to the beholders—wrought a signal change in the feeling and attitude of the colonists in that neighbourhood toward the aborigines, and was the beginning of a permanent work of grace amongst the latter.

During the ten or twenty years following, the attention of earnest Christian people in many places was attracted to the spiritual needs and capabilities of the red men. In 1815 a coloured Methodist of Virginia, named John Stewart, of his own accord opened a Mission amongst the Wyandotts of the Upper Sandusky River, in the Ohio State. His success was so remarkable that the Methodist Episcopal Church formally put him in charge of the work he had enterprised and enrolled his converts in its membership.

The tidings of these things greatly stimulated the zeal, prayers, and hopes of the Church in the direction of Indian Missions. Mr. Case in particular (now a Presiding Elder), who had always strong sympathies for the Indians, was induced to bring the condition of the Native tribes of Canada before the people at his Quarterly Meetings, and to bespeak their prayers on this behalf.

During the same year the *Methodist Magazine* in England published a letter from a military gentleman in Halifax (N.S.) 'who is interesting himself in the education of the Indians' of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Encouraged by these and similar reports, the British Missionary Society in 1816 urged its agents in the lower provinces to seek access to the aborigines.

At the Genesee Conference of 1821 Indian affairs were discussed, and a Committee was appointed, consisting of Case, Ryan, and three other Preachers, to consult on the matter and devise some plan of action. In the same year Alvin Torry, a newly ordained Elder, was put in charge of the Lyons' Creek Circuit, situated at the north-eastern extremity of Lake Erie, in which neighbourhood lay the Reservation of the Six Nations.<sup>1</sup> As Torry went his rounds, he was falling in continually with groups of Indians whose lost condition moved his pity; often

<sup>1</sup> The Cayugas, Oneidas, Senecas, Tuscaroras, Onondagas, and Mohawks. These tribes took the side of the British in the war of the Revolution, and at its close the survivors were expelled from the United States territory and had lands assigned them by the British Government north of Lake Erie, along the Grand River. Thayondanagee, the chief of the Mohawks, settled here known as Captain Joseph Brant; he was recognized for many years as a Christian man of commanding ability and force of character.

he found them lying drunk round the liquor-shops kept for their destruction by white men ; ' but,' as he afterwards said, ' it never occurred to me that the Gospel of Christ could be the power of God to *their* salvation.' Under a sudden impulse, however, prompted by the Spirit of God, he visited, toward the end of the year, the Reservation, and spent most of a day talking on religion to the Indians at home. He came away with new thoughts about them, but dismissed the idea of personal responsibility in their case, since he expected immediately to be recalled to the States. Elder Case convened a meeting of the Indian Committee to be held shortly before the approaching Conference, and summoned Torry to give evidence there. This led him to go again to see the Indian camp, with the result that his impressions crystallized into a definite wish to devote himself to the salvation of this people. On Torry's reporting his observations and convictions, Case (as he tells the story)

listened with his sharp, penetrating eyes fixed upon me, and then, bringing his hands together, he said, ' Brother Alvin, prepare to go a Missionary to the Indians after Conference.'

Accordingly, at the Genesee Conference of 1822 Alvin Torry was set apart for that work, and the Indian Mission of Canadian Methodism was formally begun.

Of his early experiences in this field Torry writes :

I had received no particular instructions as to the manner of commencing or proceeding with my labour ; and I doubt if there was a single man in the Genesee Conference, excepting Brother Case, that believed that the Indians, in their pagan state, could be Christianized ; and I am sure the brethren in Canada did not believe I could succeed. Their theory was : ' First civilize, then Christianize.'<sup>1</sup> . . . Embraced in my Mission were two English townships bordering on Lake Erie, which had been settled many years. Their people were as destitute of the Gospel and the Bible as the Indians themselves ; some of them had not heard a Gospel sermon in ten years.

Torry began by attending the Indian Councils, to the surprise and perplexity of the chiefs.

They had formed [he says] a very unfavourable opinion of Ministers from what they had seen of the Minister who occasionally officiated at

<sup>1</sup> For similar contemporary items in the case of New Zealand see Vol. III.

the Mohawk Church (a clergyman provided by the State). . . . 'We do not like your Bible-religion, they exclaimed; 'it says, drink whisky'!<sup>1</sup> . . . Look at the Mohawks; they have Bible-religion, and they all get drunk!

On the other hand, 'the so-called "Mohawk Christians" were persuaded that the Methodist religion was not good, for it prohibited their drinking rum, and playing cards, and horse-racing' (things identified with gambling, the inveterate vice of the Indians).

For the first year the Missionary did not win a single convert from the heathen Indians, who were prejudiced by the corrupt Christianity they had witnessed. He reported, however, a Society of 30 members gathered amongst the neighbouring colonists—'in these isolated settlements, bordering on the Reservation, the Lord was working gloriously.' So Torry remained in good hope. A Local Preacher named Edmund Stoney, who subsequently became a useful itinerant (1824), had before Torry's coming preached with some effect amongst the Mohawks, and now became his helper. These two were joined after a short time by Seth Crawford, a young American schoolmaster who was led to Lake Erie from his distant home at Saratoga through a dream in which he was bidden to go and teach the Indian children. He gave himself up wholly to the savages, and lived amongst them; the example, enforcing his lessons, made Christianity real to them, and a change in their attitude ensued. The Missionary could not have chosen for himself a better ally than God's providence thus sent him.

By this time the children of Augustus Jones and his Ojibway wife were nearly grown up. Their father, after the death of his first wife, had come to the neighbourhood of the Lake Erie Reservation, where he married the daughter of Chief Joseph Brant. His eldest son, Peter, had been reared chiefly amongst his mother's kindred, but received some smattering of English education and Christian knowledge. The father induced him to be baptized in the Mohawk (Anglican) Church.

My principal motives were [he writes in giving an account of his early life] that I might be entitled to the privileges of the white inhabitants, a conviction that it was a duty I owed to the Great Spirit to

<sup>1</sup> 'All these tribes,' says Torry, 'were given to intemperance, except the Cayugas.' Most of the chiefs, however, were anxious to put a stop to the sale of 'fire-water,' which they saw was destroying the young people. The Government was culpably negligent in this matter.



take upon me the name of a Christian. . . . I had been halting between two opinions. . . . When I looked upon the conduct of the whites and saw them drinking, quarrelling, fighting, and cheating the poor Indians, and acting as if there were no God, I was led to think there was no truth in the white man's religion. . . . My baptism had no effect upon my life ; I continued the same wild Indian lad as before.

In the winter of 1822-23, though now twenty years of age, Peter Jones put himself to school with Mr. Crawford, whom he learnt deeply to respect. In spring he attended Stoney's preaching at the house of Thomas Davis,<sup>1</sup> a Mohawk chief whose custom it was to gather his neighbours about him for daily prayers and Christian talk. A few weeks later a camp-meeting was held on the outskirts of the Reservation, to which both races were invited. A handful of the Indians attended, amongst whom were Peter Jones and his sister Mary. These both found light and peace in believing before the services concluded. 'When Elder Case,' who presided at the meetings, 'recognized me,' writes Peter, 'he exclaimed: "Glory to God! there stands a son of Augustus Jones amongst the converts. Now the door is opened for the work of conversion among his nation!"' So indeed it proved. From this time Torry's preaching at Captain Davis' house took effect. A Society-class was formed under the leadership of Crawford, who became pastor and Local Preacher, as well as teacher, to the little Church. The chief's house became too small for the congregation, and he retired with his family to a log cabin in the woods, so that the whole habitation might be devoted to the uses of school and chapel. Next spring (1824) saw the first Methodist chapel for Red Indians built in Davis' village. Hearing of the awakening at the Grand River, Chief Sawyer came from the River Credit, accompanied by a number of his people, who took the Gospel-fire back to their own camps. From this centre it was kindled amongst the Indians settled near Belleville (down the St. Lawrence), and near Kingston;

Then, changing its course, it hastened back, as if impelled by a mighty rushing wind, to Rice Lake, Snake Island, Muncey, Saugeen,

<sup>1</sup> Davis, writes Torry, 'was no common person. Tall, well formed, and as straight as a mountain pine, he was born to command, and had the air and mien of one who knew his power. His forehead was high ; his eye as piercing as the eagle's. His mind corresponded with his person. . . . As an orator he would have graced any of our legislative halls. . . . Bishop Hedding said of him : " I have seen many who professed to know the rules of elocution, and those who carried their principles into practice ; but never before did I see a perfect orator." '



and other places.<sup>1</sup> So rapidly did the work spread that the world was taken by surprise. Aid was sent from New York, and Mr. Case and others pressed the victory to the gate.

(Anson Green). That God was visiting the heathen, and that His hand could raise the American Indians—degraded, drunken, half-starved, as multitudes of them were—into the light of His salvation, was demonstrated to the whole Methodist Church of Canada. The simultaneous movement toward Christ of the Indian communities throughout Upper Canada showed the extraordinary solidarity existing amongst them, notwithstanding their scattered conditions and want of any common language or government; there spread through the whole body the conviction that Christianity was meant for them, and could bring them unspeakable good. The project of Missions to the Native heathen, hitherto the dream of a few enthusiasts, was now stamped with a divine consecration.

The second Indian Methodist Society on Canadian ground was planted soon after its first, amongst the Wyandotts on the westward shores of Lake Erie. This was due to John B. Finley, the American Presiding Elder, who had taken up the work of Steward amongst the southern Wyandotts. He brought a number of these people across Lake Erie from Sandusky to convey the Good News to their fellow tribesmen in Canada; this they did with immediate success. The work thus started was taken in charge by the (Canadian) River Thames Circuit. To the Conference of 1825 an Indian Church membership of 48 was reported.

The Indian work now advanced apace. Alvin Torrey was a powerful and indefatigable leader; Peter Jones became his right-hand man, developing much practical ability and the art of appealing both to white men and to red.<sup>2</sup> At a camp-meeting held in June, 1825, in Jones' native District, at which Peter Jones and Chief Davis assisted, the bearing and appearance of these two men, and the effect of their testimony on their own people, greatly impressed the whites who were present and commended the infant Missionary Society. A number of the

<sup>1</sup> The localities above-mentioned all became centres of Missions to the Indians. The two first-named were Methodist, situated east and north of Toronto; Muncey lies farther west, on the River Thames, and the Saugeen River flows into Lake Huron from the east.

<sup>2</sup> This valuable man was admitted to the ministry in 1827, and died in 1856, after a life devoted to the elevation of his mother's people. He visited England more than once, and was much admired and useful to the Indian cause.

Mississauga Indians—Peter Jones' kinsfolk—were converted. These people were deemed the most debased of all the Indians ; their transformation gave new evidence of the power of the Gospel.

When in the following month the Natives were summoned by the Government to the Credit River for the annual distribution of bounties, Torry and Jones accompanied their people from the Grand River and held Divine service on the ground. At the instance of the Christian Indians the pernicious custom of distributing brandy in honour of the occasion was dropped, never to be revived. A proposal was made that a Christian village should be built and settled on this old Indian site, which, with Government help, was carried into effect the following spring ; Peter Jones was posted there as school-master and evangelist until a European Missionary could be appointed, whose coming set him free to itinerate amongst the heathen. The settlement thus created went by the name of ' the Credit,' and became a main centre of missionary work. From this gathering many pagan Indians followed the Christians back to the Grand River to learn more of the new teaching.

A little earlier than this Torry and Jones had made an expedition seventy miles westward to visit the Muncey Indians of the Thames Valley,<sup>1</sup> invited by a young schoolmaster named John Carey, who had gathered a handful of heathen children into a School of his own. These people were a remnant of the Delawares amongst whom David Brainerd had laboured in the far south eighty years before ; they retained vestiges of his teaching, amid the medley of pagan and Roman Catholic superstitions which made up their religion. The Missionaries found them at first reserved and irresponsive. They returned a few months later, bringing five young converts from heathenism along with them, who went in and out amongst the people disarming their prejudice. The cruelty and deception practised on them by colonists had filled their minds with distrust and with scorn for the white man's religion. Gradually they learnt to distinguish between ' good and bad white

<sup>1</sup> Several bodies of Indians lived on the course of the Thames. In the Oxford township there was a Moravian Missionary, who had gathered a Church. Near to these, in Lower Munceytown, was a village of Chippewas, and another group of the same tribe twenty miles north. Torry sought out the latter on his second visit and found them quite approachable. The head quarters of the Mission were fixed at Upper Munceytown.

people,' and became accessible. Before Torry returned to the Grand River he saw the Munceytown Mission fairly established—a school in operation, a teacher in residence,<sup>1</sup> and a meeting-house about to be built. The Indian youths of the missionary party learned much on their journey to and fro, on which they were hospitably treated by Methodist folk.

Elder Case, who had been transferred, in 1822, from the west to the east of Upper Canada, was overjoyed at Torry's success, and set to work in the same direction in his new District. He visited in January, 1825, a Reservation of Mohawks near Belleville, in the Bay of Quinte neighbourhood, whom he addressed through an interpreter. A year later Peter Jones, accompanied by a Christian chief of the name of John Crane, visited the Mohawks and Ojibways hereabouts at Case's request, and found them attentive but reserved. Two youthful inquirers, both of whom later became valuable Missionaries—viz. Peter Jacobs and John Sunday<sup>2</sup>—were the first fruit of this endeavour. On Jones' next visit in May, 1826, Sunday, who was thoroughly converted, and already showed signs of uncommon power, along with Captain William Beaver, a like-minded Indian chief, was made class-leader, and set in charge of the infant disciples whom Elder Case baptized. Beaver interpreted for the white Preacher. On one occasion he launched out with great fluency on his own account, and when asked what he had been saying, he reported his exhortation thus: 'I tell 'em they must all turn away from sin; that the Great Spirit will give 'em new eyes to see, new ears to hear good things, new heart to understand, and sing, and pray—all new! I tell 'em squaws they must wash 'em blankets clean; must cook 'em victuals clean, like white woman. They must live in peace, worship God, and love one another. Then,' he exclaimed, with a motion of hand and arm

<sup>1</sup> The funds for this purpose were collected from white subscribers by the Preachers of the Thames and Westminster Circuits, with the active encouragement of Thomas Madden, Presiding Elder of the District.

<sup>2</sup> Sunday was the English corruption of Shawundais; he was christened John at his baptism. Entering the ministry in 1837, he served faithfully till his death, at the age of eighty, in 1875. John Sunday was scantily educated, having lived in savage and drunken ignorance till early manhood, and could barely read and write. Nor had he the gift of graceful eloquence which distinguished other Indian speakers. But his defects were compensated by wonderful shrewdness, penetration, and ingenuity of mind. He had a natural genius for sermonizing, and grappled powerfully with the conscience. He was highly humorous, to the extent sometimes of drollery, that was oddly set off by his broken English. This gift made him immensely popular on the English missionary platform, where he appeared in later years. He succeeded in course of time to the chieftainship of the Rice Lake Ojibways.



as if to level an uneven surface, 'the Holy Spirit make the ground all smooth before you!' The first hymn these Indians learnt to sing was that beginning, 'Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer's praise'; this they repeated over and over again, as if they could never cease. The camp-meeting held at that time resulted in the conversion of 90 persons.

From the Indian Missions 250 approved Church members were reported to the Canada Conference of 1826, which met at a town not far from Rice Lake. A bilingual camp-meeting, held a few miles away, had preceded the Conference, at which about 20 pagans professed conversion, and 40 adult Indians, previously brought to the knowledge of Christ, were baptized. But the climax of this awakening came a little later, on the occasion of a visit of a company of Chippewa heathen from Rice Lake, headed by their Chief Potash, to the Conference itself, when an extraordinary scene occurred, which is described by Alvin Torrey. The visitors attended a large prayer-meeting held in the course of the public services, along with the Christian Indians. One of the latter was leading the prayers of the assembly, accompanied in an undertone by his companions, when tears were seen coursing down the cheeks of the old chief; suddenly he broke out:

O Great Spirit, have mercy on poor me! O Son of the Great Spirit, have mercy on me! Jesus, come and cast the bad spirit out of my heart and make poor wicked Indian glad and happy.

Soon all the pagans were weeping and crying aloud, smitten with the same convictions. After a pause, Potash began to tremble like an aspen leaf; a moment more, and he fell to the ground as if dead. One by one his followers dropped in like fashion. But the Lord breathed upon them, and they sprang to their feet giving praises to God. The chief arose with a heavenly smile on his countenance, and, clapping his hand to his breast, cried: 'Oh, happy here! O blessed Jesus, how I love Thee! Oh, glory, glory!' One after another rose in this way, until twenty out of the thirty were praising God. Such manifestations were common amongst these artless children of the forest when the 'wondrous story' first reached their minds. And the fruits of the Spirit followed on their rapturous entrance into the new life.



This astonishing movement towards Christianity amongst the Indians was the most conspicuous feature of the years of Canadian Methodist independence, 1824-28. The work advanced with great rapidity, the Conference of 1827 recording an Indian membership more than doubled within the year. The camp-meeting method, so well adapted to the climate and to the habits of the indigenous people accustomed to festival gatherings for religious purposes, proved under strong management an invaluable means of propagation; a single effective campaign of this kind would sometimes bring a whole tribe and a wide area of country under the influence of the Gospel. Alvin Torrey's plan of sending out little companies of converted Natives under a picked leader, to travel amongst the heathen of the wilderness, was effectively pursued for many years. But such measures required a patient and systematic following up, by the planting of schoolmasters, the regular and close supervision of European Missionaries, the training of the savages in industry and the elements of civilization, and their protection from the fraud and vile temptations practised on their childishness by unscrupulous white people. All this involved an expenditure in men and means, and a sustained and well-directed policy, which the little colonial Church could ill supply from its unaided resources. Already, however, within the first four or five years, the success of the Mission was assured. Some half-dozen stations were occupied, extending along the borders and amongst the Indian Reservations of the colony. Around these centres drunkenness was disappearing; the cultivation of the soil was spreading; tidy homes and gardens were replacing the old filthy wigwams. Onlookers marvelled at the transformation of the red man, exulting in the change or deploring it according to their disposition. There were those who regarded the improvement of the Natives as a peril to the colonists; such men are the enemies of Christian Missions in every land—they are, in truth, enemies of humanity, and the most dangerous persons in the British Empire. The Indian converts were in general demonstrative; the new religion brought them a joy which shone in every feature; it touched springs of emotion in their nature and called out forms of ability the existence of which had been hardly suspected. The chiefs, in a number of important instances, became 'obedient to the

faith'<sup>1</sup> and led their people in the new paths, so that the patriarchal discipline of the tribes could be largely utilized for purposes of Christian oversight. Among the converted chieftains were men of remarkable force, and even greatness, of character.

The success of the Credit settlement encouraged Case to plan a similar industrial School and colony for the Bay of Quinte Indians. An island near the shore, leased for this purpose, was planted with Indian families; and the Grape Island Station remained for many years a nursery of Indian Christian life. Ultimately this establishment was removed to the Rice Lake. In 1827 Alvin Torry was transferred to the United States, his post on the Grand River being filled by a capable young Preacher, of exceptional powers of endurance, named Joseph Messmore.<sup>2</sup>

Trouble now threatened the Credit River Mission from an unhappy quarter. The Anglican party, concerned at the impression Methodism was making on the Natives, laid plans to capture this fortress. At the formation of the settlement the Lieutenant-Governor had promised to provide the Christian Indians with twenty house-dwellings and a School. At the instigation of Dr. Strachan he subsequently proposed to make the fulfilment of this undertaking contingent on the beneficiaries renouncing their present teachers and holding aloof from the Methodist camp-meetings, of which he expressed his disapproval. Public assistance, he informed them, could only be given to those who placed themselves under the care of 'the Established Church.' At the same time Dr. Strachan offered remunerative posts to Peter Jones and his brother in the service of the Church of England. Jones referred these overtures to the decision of the people, when John Sunday spoke thus on their behalf: 'We made out to live, even when we were sinners; shall not the Good Spirit, whom we now serve, take care of us?' The matter came under the cognizance of the Provincial House of Assembly, and these intrigues deservedly failed. They had the effect of heightening the resentment shared by Canadian Methodists with other

<sup>1</sup> In the early South African Mission, amongst the Bantus, the opposite experience prevailed; the chiefs were hinderers and persecutors, where their people inclined to the message of Christ.

<sup>2</sup> Messmore entered the ministry in 1823; after a long term of manful service he died in 1879.

Nonconformists against Anglican policy. The missionary report made to the Canadian Conference of 1828 registered about 800 Church members, gathered around ten Stations. There were 12 Schools, attended by 300 scholars. The Missionaries had baptized from the beginning 1,200 Natives, after careful instruction. It was estimated that at this date 10,000 Indians were under Methodist influence on the North American continent.

At the above Conference William Case, being made President, laid down the District Eldership; he was set apart as General Superintendent of the Indian Missions, to which he had for the last six years devoted much of his time and strength. He made his residence at Grape Island, taking immediate oversight of the industrial Mission there. Early in the year he went on a tour in the States in the interests of the Indian work, accompanied by John Sunday and Peter Jacobs. The visit awakened lively interest in the Canadian Mission to the red men, and brought much-needed pecuniary help; above all, it secured the enlistment of two American ladies, the Misses Eliza Barnes<sup>1</sup> and Hester Ann Hubbard, who devoted themselves to the evangelizing and training of the heathen women. The gifts and education of these ladies made them invaluable auxiliaries; others followed their example. A powerful impetus was given by this means to the civilization of the Indians, through the training of their women and girls, who were eager to learn the housekeeping of the white folk. Every year the prosperity of the Christian settlements became more conspicuous. The abolition of intoxicants and the development of agriculture, together with the learning of household arts, put the Natives in a position of comfort undreamed of in their heathen state.<sup>2</sup>

Two men who rendered eminent service in the raising of the Indian people were drawn by Case into the ranks of the Mission about this time. One of these was James Evans, the brother of Ephraim, of Yorkshire antecedents. Already past his

<sup>1</sup> Case, who had remained single until past middle age, married Miss Hubbard, not long after her removal to Canada; on her early death Miss Barnes became his second wife. The latter lady preached occasionally, and was greatly admired in that capacity.

<sup>2</sup> A fact related in the words of a colonist neighbouring the Credit River settlement indicates the change that had come about and the reasons for the hostility of unscrupulous traders to Missions: 'The river is celebrated for its salmon fishery. Before the Indians were enlightened with Divine truth, a salmon could be purchased of them for a gill of whisky; but now we have to pay three York shillings for a fish, the Indians never, since they became Methodist, touching a drop of spirits.'



youth, he was first engaged as a teacher, and was put into the ministry in 1830. Evans and his wife were both uncommonly clever and resourceful as well as devoted persons, well adapted for pioneer service. James Evans developed a genius for linguistics. He arrived in the course of time at the invention of the Syllabic characters, which has been applied to the writing of all the North American indigenous languages. An admirably simple and convenient script, this device has enormously facilitated the education of the Indian tribes ; a Native youth of ordinary talent, using Evans' Syllabary, can learn to read in a few days. In 1840 this gifted man was sent to start the new Mission in the Hudson Bay Territory. The hardships endured in his task undermined Evans' constitution, and he died in 1846 when on a visit to England, while still in middle life.

The other Missionary we refer to was Thomas Hurlburt, one of five brothers in the Canadian Methodist ministry, only less famous than the Ryerson family. For nearly ten years Thomas Hurlburt buried himself as a schoolmaster amongst the Indians ; only in 1835 was Joseph Stinson able, almost by main force, to press him into the ministry, when he was passed through all the stages of probation and ordained forthwith. He had already discharged an evangelic apostolate amongst the heathen. So thoroughly did he identify himself with his people that an old chief called him ' an Indian in a white man's skin.' For a short time he laboured in the United States (the family were ' American '), but later returned to his first love in the Indian missionary work, and was the first Chairman under the British Conference of the Hudson Bay District. He lived to a great age, finishing his course in 1873. Thomas Hurlburt was in every way a tower of strength, massive in character and mind as in bodily person. Sylvester Hurlburt was an older brother, but entered the ministry a year later, when he had been for long a ' Missionary in all but name ' ; he was a man of the same type as Thomas, though not of equally commanding force ; he spent his strength chiefly in the same field.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Asahel Hurlburt joined the ranks in 1827, remaining in the colonial work, where he gradually came to the front, ranking as District Chairman in his later years. A notable Preacher, distinguished by depth of thought and intensity, Asahel ' travelled ' for nearly forty years. Erastus, the youngest of the quintet and the least distinguished, fulfilled a useful course of twenty years in the active ministry. The scholar of the family was Jesse, a very gentlemanly and dignified man, who was made tutor and subsequently Principal of the Upper Canada Academy of Cobourg, but never travelling a Circuit. He retired from the ministry somewhat early.



Canadian Methodism gave of its best to the work of the Indian Mission ; its zeal for this object, and the consciousness of its deficient resources, led to the amalgamation, too readily effected, with the British Conference in 1833. When the rupture followed in 1840, William Case and Thomas Hurlburt, induced by the same consideration, remained on the British side, and carried most of the Indian staff with them, though in their general sympathies they were one with their Canadian brethren. The Indian membership at the former date (1833) was about 1,000. The principal stations then occupied were nine, including, beside those already named, Coldwater, which lay northwest of Lake Simcoe, near the Georgian Bay opening into Lake Huron, and Amherstburgh, on the Detroit River, the settlement of the Wyandott Indians evangelized first from Ohio (U.S.). Only four of these posts were occupied by resident white missionaries. By appointment of the British Missionary Committee, Joseph Stinson superseded Case in the office of General Superintendent, the latter being designated 'General Missionary to the Indian Tribes'<sup>1</sup> and taking charge of the Credit settlement. Peter Jones<sup>2</sup> and John Sunday continued to exercise a wide missionary itinerancy. Samuel Belton, a well-tried colonial Minister of the Methodist Episcopal days (he entered the Canadian work in 1819), whose 'wisdom and patience peculiarly adapted him to manage these children of the forest,' was stationed as Mission Superintendent at Lake Simcoe. Belton's imposing physical proportions and his kindly Irish heart were both excellent recommendations to the favour of the red men. Joseph Messmore remained at the Grand River. Sylvester Hurlburt, still officially a lay-schoolmaster, took over the Grape Island establishment from Case.

Stinson soon discovered how inadequate had been the pastoral care provided for the Indian converts. The Indian Societies were attached, in many cases, to the nearest colonial Circuits, sharing in the visitation made by the Ministers on

<sup>1</sup> 'Who will also,' it was added, 'pay attention to the translation of the sacred Scriptures into the Indian languages.' Peter Jones, whose head quarters were at the Credit, was Case's chief instrument in this work, and subsequently James Evans. The printing was done at the expense of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

<sup>2</sup> Jones returned in the spring of 1833 from the visit to England which excited a new popular interest in the North American Indians, and incidentally led to the negotiations terminating in the British-Canadian Methodist union. He brought back with him an English wife.

their extensive rounds. Such occasional oversight, all too slight for English Churches, was utterly inadequate for the needs of newly converted heathen. The new Superintendent, who made strict inquisition, was compelled to use the pruning-knife; scores of those who had given proof of conversion in the early exciting times of the Mission, had gone back into the wilderness, or were lost to sight for want of sufficient shepherding. But the bulk of the Indian Methodists remained steadfast. As Stinson writes in the report presented at the close of the first year of his Superintendency :

Never in the whole history of Missions have there been exhibited more delightful evidences of true conversion than in the change wrought in the minds and conduct of the aborigines of this continent. The work has not been like 'morning cloud and early dew,' which pass away; it is deep and permanent.

The British Conference in 1834 sent six recruits to reinforce the Canadian Missions to the destitute settlers and the Native heathen. Five of these—Jonathan Scott, Benjamin Slight, John Douse, Jonathan Gladwin, and William Steer—were assigned to the Indian field. They were all capable men and good preachers, none of them very young. Gladwin died early, after making thorough proof of his ministry; Steer remained permanently in the Indian work; the other three, after doing pioneer service amongst the Natives, were in course of time drafted into English Stations.

The toils and adventures of Joseph Stinson's superintendency are enough to fill a volume by themselves. He visited the remotest Stations of his charge with the regularity of a Presiding Elder, seeing everything with his own eyes and leaving no lonely Missionary unencouraged. In the intervals of his visitations he travelled the colonies as missionary advocate, promoting goodwill towards the red men and enlisting the sympathy of the religious public everywhere. He introduced missionary meetings after the English plan, and saw a great advance effected in local contributions to the Mission Fund. In this part of the work he was vigorously assisted by the British President, William Lord, as well as by Case and several of the popular Canadian Preachers.

A sad feature in the report of 1836 is the record of the downfall, at the Credit Mission, of several Native young men of

promise, 'whose inexperience rendered them a comparatively easy prey to the wiles and machinations' of white seducers, who 'do all in their power to corrupt and destroy our Indians.' As the country opened up and the improved condition of the Christian Indians created business, unscrupulous traders followed in the missionary's track, and proved themselves his most dangerous opponents. About this time Sir John Colborne was succeeded in the Lieutenant Governorship by Sir Francis B. Head, whose mismanagement of Indian affairs and subservience to the Anglican faction proved detrimental to Methodist work, while it inflamed the political contention which came to a head in the Rebellion of 1837. Although they took no part in the sedition, the Indians were greatly disquieted by the refusal of the provincial Government to give them a legal title to the settlements and reservations on which they had been placed under a general promise of security. Discouraged in their attempts at social improvement, they too easily fell back into idleness and dissipation. The Christian Indians had reclaimed the lands allotted to them and made the property valuable; but their tenure was threatened by colonists who cast covetous eyes on 'Naboth's vineyard,' finding Native occupation in the way of their schemes of aggrandizement. Peter Jones visited England a second time, at the request of the Missionary Committee in London in 1837-39 (Sunday had been in England somewhat earlier, on the like service); he was able to make representations upon this anxious subject at the Colonial Office, which helped to promote the equitable adjustment of the question of property in Indian lands subsequently arrived at.

During the same year Dr. John Beecham, now Secretary at Hatton Garden, was called before a Committee of the House of Commons to give evidence on the relation of Christian Missions to the civilizing of savage peoples. He argued with great ability that 'the Gospel itself was the efficient means of civilization,' and that its introduction was 'the first requisite for this purpose'—particularly in Canada, where Indians

had resisted all the benevolent endeavours which had been made to civilize them while in their heathen state; but when they had received the Gospel . . . a desire was created in them for the comforts of civilized society, and they were then easily induced to engage in those pursuits which would improve their temporal condition.



Under the wise oversight of James Evans, the Saugeen Mission (east of Lake Huron) during the period of agitation steadily prospered. He reports that up to this time he has not had to mourn over a single case of backsliding. Evans graphically describes a typical camp-meeting held on the banks of the St. Clair River. A piece of sloping ground in the forest was cleared of undergrowth and fallen timber, leaving the standing trees for shade. Pulpit and platform, with huts behind to lodge the staff, were readily constructed on the ground, seats of split tree-trunks being fixed up for the congregation. Tents were provided in sufficient numbers for those who might be unable to bring their own shelters for the night ; the Indians were accustomed to extemporize forest bivouacs. In the conduct of the services Evans was assisted by an American Preacher from across Lake Huron ; President Lord and Superintendent Stinson, bringing a couple of laymen from Montreal, arrived in the course of the meetings, to which their presence and speech imparted a solemn dignity. The singing attracted passing heathen Natives, who entered the ground expecting to witness a drunken frolic, but found themselves, with saving effect, under the spell of ' Jesu's name.' After two or three fine days a thunderstorm, rising at night, drenched the encampment, none of the shelters being proof against the downpour ; but the affliction was taken in the best of humours ; the hot morning sun quickly dried everything, and no sufferer appeared seriously the worse. Beside the immediate gain in conversions almost always realized, sometimes on a large scale, in these open-air conventions, they had the further advantage of rallying the Methodist forces over a wide area, bringing the scattered people into touch with each other, and of advertising the Gospel and the blessings it brings as no other means could have done.

In the Stations of 1836 ' Rice Lake and Grape Island ' figure as one Missionary Circuit. The latter settlement, which had proved, for its purpose, inconveniently distant from the larger bodies of the Indian people, was in course of removal to a location on the south of Rice Lake, which was named *Alderville* (in honour of Secretary Alder). Here William Case now made his abode, remaining settled at this station amongst his loved Indian folk for the rest of his life, while he exercised a



wide influence over the direction of the Mission work. Alder-ville was step by step built up into the largest and most complete Indian industrial establishment. Land was laid out in farms of fifty acres each, a good frame cottage, with garden in front and orchard behind, being planted on every farm, and the cultivators by co-operation gaining economic independence. Other manual industries beside that of farming were taught to the youths; and a large Boarding School was set up to which Native girls were brought from distant stations, acquiring along with moral and religious instruction the arts and something of the refinements of domestic life.<sup>1</sup> In other quarters the uncertainty of tenure, which continued until 1840, militated against settled industry on the part of the Natives, and proved ruinous in too many instances. Peter Jones, after a visit to Coldwater in 1837, reports that, in consequence of the ill-advised action of Governor Head, 'this station appears to be quite broken up, and the fields are growing over with weeds.' The people of Munceytown, on the Thames, were scattered for the time by an order sent down in the summer of 1838 to evacuate the post, dictated by fear of invasion from America; the friendly relations between the United States and Great Britain were just then severely strained through circumstances connected with the recent rebellion in Canada.

Early in his superintendency Stinson instituted inquiries into the present as compared with the former condition of the Indian tribes in contact with our Missions, which yielded some interesting results. Though exact statistics were not procurable, it was calculated on good evidence that in one District the mortality within the ten years following the introduction

<sup>1</sup> In a letter to Peter Jones, Case describes how he beguiled the homesickness of new-comers at the Boarding-School: 'I asked if they would go with me into the hayfield and help me make the hay; so they brightened up, and all followed like so many little lambs. They got into a pleasant glee, and all their troubles for the time passed away. . . . We erected in the shed swings . . . and with these they are, between school-hours, amused and delighted. . . . We are confirmed in the opinion that it is altogether preferable to take the children from their homes; after first feelings of homesickness, they will be found more steady and attentive to instruction.' It is a pretty picture of the white-haired, merry-hearted old Preacher, and the shy, wild, Indian girls making friends as they toss the grass in the hayfield. This was our earliest missionary Boarding School for girls. The difficulty arose here which has been encountered in other Mission Fields, occasioned by the pride of parents, who regarded domestic accomplishments as beneath their children. An Indian father of rank writes complaining that his daughter has been '*cooking* for the scholars where she is. . . . She has not time enough to go to School, but is kept in the kitchen, to be servant for her school-mates'—'a touch of nature' that one recognizes nearer home.

of Christianity had been reduced to one-fifth of that prevailing in the previous ten years.

Before we were Christians [testified Chief Sawyer] we were all drunkards; many used to perish by being burnt to death; others by being frozen; others by the hands of each other.

While Case was developing new methods at Alderville and applying a more intensive cultivation to the Indian Mission, Thomas Hurlburt and James Evans, assisted by the Indian evangelists, John Sunday and Peter Jacobs, were pushing its extension far to the north-west. They found ahead of them in this direction the Romanist pioneers, and an enterprising American Baptist Preacher who had opened a successful Mission near to Fort William, on the north shore of Lake Superior. Saulte Sainte Marie, at the eastern outlet of this island sea, was occupied for a while as a Methodist station, but abandoned at the division of 1840. Evans was recalled eastward in 1840 and placed in charge of one of the 'Domestic Missions,'<sup>1</sup> while he prepared for a new venture which the British Missionary Society was projecting, to be made in the Hudson Bay Territory apart from the work of Canadian Methodism. By the year 1840, when the union between the British and Canadian Conferences was dissolved, the Indian staff generally casting in their lot with the former body,<sup>2</sup> the Church membership of the Mission increased to 1,382.

On his visit to Upper Canada in the same year, Dr. Alder succeeded by representations made to the new Lieutenant-Governor, Sir George Arthur, and to the provincial Legislature, in securing some remedy for the wrong done to the Indians in withholding from them a legal title to their lands held in commonalty. The favour of the Government was enlisted for industrial missionary work. It was further attempted at this time, but unsuccessfully, to get the grant made by Government in aid of the Society's work (so long a bone of contention in Canada) settled upon the 'Casual and Territorial Revenue,' which was at the disposal of Government. Alder's letter of this date bearing on these questions, addressed to Sir George

<sup>1</sup> The name given during the period 1833-40 to Missions for the 'destitute settlers' on the frontier.

<sup>2</sup> The Native Ministers, as well as the English, were divided in their allegiance; Peter Jones sided with the Canadian, John Sunday with the British, Conference.

Arthur<sup>1</sup> and printed in the *Annual Report* for 1840, is an important document for this epoch.

The *Report* for 1840 also announces the proposals of the Missionary Society for entering the territory of the Hudson Bay Company, which lay detached from the colonies of the St. Lawrence basin.

In addition to the European and half-caste population residing at the numerous forts and stations belonging to the Company in those immense countries [it is said] there is in the southern departments of the territory an Indian population amounting to upwards of 10,000 souls. In the northern department, extending in a northerly and southerly direction from the height of land which divides the waters that fall into Lake Superior from those that fall into the tributaries of the Mississippi-Missouri, to the high land that divides the waters which fall into the Polar Sea from those that flow into Hudson's Bay, and in a westerly direction from Hudson's Bay to the Rocky Mountains, there is an Indian population of 100,000 souls. To these the way is now open, in consequence of arrangements into which the Committee have entered with the Governor and Committee of the Hudson Bay Company; and 30 Missionaries might at once be employed amongst them.

The Hudson Bay Company, who had discouraged attempts of Romanist Missions on their territory (probably through fear of political mischief), were wishful to see Methodism planted in this ground; they had taken note of the success achieved amongst the Canadian Indians, and were influenced, not only by philanthropic motives, but by the belief that the 'godliness' the messengers of the Gospel inculcated held for the savages 'the promise of the life that now is,' including the promise of better service in the business of the Company and a larger and sounder trade. They undertook to bear the ordinary expenses of maintenance and travelling for the Missionaries first appointed, subscribing £100 toward the outfit and passage from England. This liberal invitation was at once embraced. James Evans, by this time well versed in Indian life and lore, was put in charge of the venture, three young Missionaries being sent from England to assist him—by name George Barnley, William Mason, and Robert Terrill Rundle. Evans was stationed at the central post of *Norway House*, situated at the northern end of Lake Winnipeg; Barnley at *Moose Fort*,

<sup>1</sup> This was the first Canadian Governor to show an open mind toward Methodist work, and to deal courteously with its representatives. His friendship with Dr. Alder went so far as to cause misgivings in Alder's own Church.



on St. James Bay, to the south-east; William Mason south-westwards at *Rainy Lake*, on the borders of Minnesota, a spot already reached by the Canadian Methodist explorers; and Rundle at *Rocky Mountain House*, in the extreme north-west, about half-way between Calgary and Edmonton, chief towns of the present Province of Alberta. The new Mission Field—a continent rather than a 'District'—was the widest and the loneliest in the world; between its eastern and western stations more than 1,500 miles of distance stretched. 'In journeyings oft, in perils of rivers' and 'of robbers,' in perils in the wilderness, in fastings oft, *in cold*—the bitterest on the face of the habitable earth—these Missionaries of the frozen north had indeed an apostolic experience.<sup>1</sup> Evans in a few years died exhausted. Barnley and Rundle were compelled to return to England after eight years amongst the snows. Both did manful and lasting work in America, and recovered to fulfil a lengthened ministry at home. During his brief missionary course Rundle acquired a marvellous influence over the wild tribes that roamed beneath the Rocky Mountains. Fifty years later, at the time of his death (in 1896), the name of this hero-pioneer was reverently cherished amongst the Indians of the Saskatchewan country. Mason wrought faithfully and steadily in solitude and under the hardest conditions, until in 1854 he saw fit to transfer his services to the Anglican Mission in the same country. For several years previously he had remained the sole ordained Minister in the whole of the Hudson Bay Mission. Thomas Hurlburt, who had already broken a way from Canada to Lake Superior, was transferred to this District in 1841. Hither also two Indian evangelists were drafted—Peter Jacobs, whom we have already met in Canada, and Henry E. Steinhaur,<sup>2</sup> a son of the Credit River Mission, who had been educated at the Cobourg Academy and proved an invaluable auxiliary—'a thorough Indian,' of great physical endurance and 'reliable in all respects.' Steinhaur, after assisting at various Mission posts, was ordained in 1855 and sent to occupy Rundle's vacated station.

Pre-eminent among this little band for energy and

<sup>1</sup> Egerton Young's picturesque narrative, entitled *By Canoe and Dog Train*, supplies a vivid picture of missionary experience and adventure in these regions, belonging to a later time and more advanced condition of the work.

<sup>2</sup> The Indian boy received this name from a gentleman in the United States, who bore the cost of his education and virtually adopted him.



inventiveness was their leader, James Evans. By this time he was transferred to the north ; he had already discovered the method of his Syllabic characters, and found it as applicable to the dialects he now encountered as to those he had mastered on the older field. Without the use of letter and Scripture he realized that his work among the Indians could make no stable advance ; but literary implements were utterly wanting in this desolate region. Egerton Young writes :

So remote from civilization was Norway House, and, above all, so expensive was it to get in supplies, that Mr. Evans resolved to begin with the resources within his reach. For the manufacture of his type he used the thin sheets of lead which were found in the tea-chests, imported by the fur-traders for sale to the Indians. Carving out little (wooden) models of his characters, he made casts of them in soft clay ; then, pouring into the moulds the melted lead, he secured, after many failures, type sufficient for his use. He made his ink out of chimney-soot mixed with sturgeon-oil. He had no paper, and so had to be content with birch-bark as a substitute—a material serving better than anyone would imagine who had not tried it. The jack-screw which the traders used in packing their bales of fur he made to do duty as a printing-press. With these primitive appliances the work of furnishing the Indians with portions of Scripture and hymns in their own language began.

The languages of the North American Indians, though exceedingly plastic and various, are uniform and limited in the combinations of syllables making up their words. Evans availed himself of this fact in framing his Syllabary. Each of his characters represents not what we call a 'letter,' but a whole syllable forming a complete vocal sound. By this mode of expression written words are abbreviated and spelling is vastly simplified. When the characters have once been memorized, the difficulties of reading and writing vanish, and orthography is mastered at a stroke.

When those who had become Christians and had thus broken the chains of superstition had the method explained to them, they became eager students ; they were able to read as fast as new copies (of the books required) could be made. Not only this, but they became teachers themselves, and carried to distant hunting-camps the knowledge they had acquired, gladly explaining to others the wonderful invention.<sup>1</sup>

Never had any literary invention spread at once so fast and so far as the Evans Syllabary did. The nomad Indian hunters

<sup>1</sup> *The Apostle of the North : A Memoir of James Evans*, by E.R. Young.

diffused this marvellous art to the remotest corners of North America, and the message of salvation was spelled out by solitary wigwam-fires where no Missionary's foot had ever trod.

Evans' literary toil did not prevent his itinerating over his continental diocese. He was a man of warm and of buoyant disposition, who stirred enthusiasm and carried good cheer with him wherever he moved, bearing all sorts of hardship with a gay good humour. In the *Report* for 1843 he writes of his nearer charge at the Norway House Station :

The Indians have made extraordinary exertions since their conversion ; if, under the Divine blessing, they continue to cultivate habits of industry, there will be little fear of their suffering for want of the necessaries of life, even in this inhospitable climate. . . . The religious state of the Mission is encouraging. Blessed be God, we have sunshine, and no frosts ! . . . The grace of God can change the savage into the saint.

He reports that up to this date the labour spent at the Rocky Mountain Station, where Rundle was posted, had proved comparatively unproductive ; yet here also, as we have intimated, a most salutary and lasting impression was made on the untamed heathen of the Saskatchewan valley. Reflecting on the slender occupation of this enormous area, Evans warns the Society that

If we do not enlarge the sphere of our operations by occupying additional posts, we shall soon have the door closed—not by our Protestant brethren,<sup>1</sup> who I wish were in possession of the country with us, but by the Roman priests, who appear to have just risen from the dead in the land, and are making the most strenuous efforts to go before us in every quarter.

While the Hudson Bay extension of the Indian Missions was thus traversing the vast uncolonized areas of the continent, the older Canadian branches of the work were steadily growing. A Canadian Preacher who visited Mantoulin Island, on Lake Huron, at the time of the yearly distribution of Government gifts, indicates in his report how the converted Natives were used to Mission their brethren. Thousands of Indians were gathered on the spot, with Missionaries of various Churches amongst them.<sup>2</sup> The Wesleyan Indians, of whom there were

<sup>1</sup> The Church Missionary Society about this time commenced the work it has wrought for the North American Indians with abounding success.

<sup>2</sup> Other colonial Churches, on witnessing the success of the Methodists amongst the aborigines, followed their example, in some respects bettering it.

many various stations, ran up a temporary chapel, which they roofed with the sails from their canoes. Here they assembled each day for prayers and instruction, bringing along with them so many as they could of the heathen. Some of the professed Christians present lived in outlying spots, where they received perhaps but once or twice a year the teaching of the itinerant Missionary ; to these such an assembly was a great opportunity and a time of religious festival. The visitor found amongst the Indians men led to Christ years ago during John Sunday's brief residence on the northern shore of Lake Superior (1838-39), who had never met a Christian teacher since, but had maintained from that time regular Christian worship amongst themselves.

In the course of the year 1843-44 Matthew Richey, now (British) Chairman of the Canada West District, inspected the work amongst the Natives at the Rice Lake Station, and at Alderville, on the opposite (south) side of the water. He was struck with the superiority of the Church at the latter station, which he attributed to the influence of the *Boarding School* established there. The wandering propensities hereditary in the people, he says, made it wellnigh impossible to secure a satisfactory attendance at the Day School, and few of the parents could themselves control their children in this respect ; the Boarding School supplied a cure for the malady. At the instance of their chief Sunday (Shawundais), the Indians of this District voted £100 of the annuity paid them by Government to the support of the Alderville Industrial School—an appropriation heartily endorsed by the Governor General ; later, they made a grant of two hundred acres of land for the same purpose. These were welcome signs of the growing intelligence of the Native folk, and their attachment to the Mission which had brought them all manner of good. About the same time (1844) a revival took place in the Grand River Mission—Torry's old station—where for some years the work had languished ; the neighbouring Amherstburgh Society, which at an early time had grown out of the Mission, continued all the while to flourish. It came to be remarked that frequent change of ministry militated against sustained success in the Indian field. Workers of experience saw that life-long devotion to this single cause was essential to any great achievement, and that men must remain in a given locality long enough to master the



Native dialect and to use it with effect when learnt. The alternation between Native and English work, to which the itinerancy lent itself, was manifestly prejudicial to the solid building up of Indian Christianity.<sup>1</sup>

The Hudson Bay District suffered a heavy blow in the death of James Evans in 1846, when scarcely beyond his prime. He had visited England in the hope of repairing his health, worn by toil and exposure ; but he had spent himself too lavishly. Barnley was also compelled to retreat home ; Mason was removed to Norway House ; Thomas Hurlburt had crossed the border into the United States, where the Methodist Episcopal Church made him a missionary Presiding Elder ; Rundle remained for a while at his western outpost ; Jacobs was the only member of the original staff left on the field. Instead of the reinforcement coming for which James Evans had pleaded, the slender band of pioneers found itself depleted. Here, as on almost every missionary field at this time, the wretched quarrels attending the struggle for reform in home Methodism, arrested the work of saving the heathen, breaking the heart of devoted servants of God and wasting their health or even life.

Though reduced to narrow limits, the Methodist work of Christianization advanced in the Hudson Bay Territory during the later forties. The seed sown by James Evans about Lake Winnipeg sprang up in many directions. William Mason, who writes from this quarter in 1848, bears striking testimony to the social and religious progress that had been realized :

When I came here in 1843 I was always pained at the sight of the females, with a strap which they passed across their foreheads, carrying heavy loads of wood on their backs daily through the winter ; but now it is very rare to see women carry wood at all ; their husbands or the young men haul it home on sledges. Their parchment windows are disappearing, and glass ones taking their place ; an air of comfort pervades their dwellings . . . family devotion is most strictly observed, whether at home or in the woods. And our Native local brethren, when hunting, endeavour so to contrive matters that they may have a small congregation to address on the Lord's Day.

The women, in attending at public worship or in walking abroad, had very generally exchanged the Native blanket,

<sup>1</sup> Comparison between North American and South African experience in these points is interesting.



wrapped about them in the ugliest fashion, for more civilized apparel, and even presented, some of them, 'a genteel appearance'; where it continued to be worn, the blanket was now *clean*. 'They make their own soap, and take a pride in imitating everything European.' James Evans, inventive genius as he was, had introduced to these wilds mechanical improvements and contrivances of many kinds.

No single case of drunkenness or Sabbath-breaking [the pastor declares] has taken place amongst them during the past quarter. . . . The Sabbath and Day Schools, under the care of Mr. H. B. Steinhaur, continue to prosper.

Alas, before this year ended Robert Rundle's strength broke down; the only Ministers left in charge of this huge Mission were the English William Mason and the Indian Peter Jacobs. The Canadian Mission a little earlier (in 1847) had been greatly strengthened by the accession to the staff of Robert Brooking, who, returning to England with health shattered by six years' labour in West Africa,<sup>1</sup> devoted his very considerable powers for the remainder of his life to the Indian Missions of British North America.

The office of General Superintendent of Missions, held by Joseph Stinson during the first period of union (1833-40), lapsed on the separation of the Conferences, the several Mission Stations falling to the direction of the Chairmen of the Districts to which they geographically belonged. But when in 1847 the reunion came about, the General Superintendency was revived for Canada; a few years later the Hudson Bay District was placed under the same administration. Enoch Wood was put in charge of this department, and controlled it for many years. He was a man of large statesmanship, combined with the finest Christian character and temper and extraordinary working power. Though no longer young at the time of this appointment, and unequal to the constant travelling which Dr. Stinson had been used to undertake, Dr. Enoch Wood's great sagacity and skill in administration, and the peculiar confidence reposed in him by all parties inside and outside of the Church, made him an unsurpassed director of the missionary activities of Canadian Methodism. The work had suffered painfully from the division of forces and from the difficulties with which the isolated

<sup>1</sup> See Vol. IV.

Canadian Conference had to struggle in the forties. Restored unity and concentration of management imparted to it fresh vigour. On the whole, the Indian Missionary Circuits show decline rather than increase in Church membership during this period (1847-55), though every year brought added strength as the Native Churches became more settled in Christian habits. A marked and continuous advance in numbers began after the creation of the Affiliated Conference in 1855, when the reunited Canadian Methodism was cast upon its own resources. By this time also Enoch Wood's superintendence had been extended to the whole field (including Hudson Bay) and was beginning to tell in full force.

After making his first official visit to Alderville, Wood writes :

Can anything be more exciting to a religiously benevolent mind than to pause as you emerge out of the woods on the plains leading to this settlement of Christian Indians, and from the brow of the hill to look on the cultivated plains below, surveying their gardens, their pastures, their fields of wheat and oats, their cows and oxen? . . . Look at that holy sanctuary, with its tower and bell; the neat school-house, used also for a council-chamber; on the other side of the church the Missionary's residence, near which an improved brick structure is advancing to completion, built by the Indians' own money, by which the labours and studies of the Industrial School will be conducted with greater efficiency.

In 1849 a second school of this nature was erected at Munceytown, farther west—the Mount Elgin Institution. This foundation was placed for a short time under the direction of Samuel Dwight Rice,<sup>1</sup> and then more permanently under Samuel Rose, a man conspicuous in the Canadian ministry for forty years, who possessed unusual business ability combined with qualities of heart which gave him a great hold upon the Indian people. 'The Indian Department,' about this time created in the Local Government, recognized the value of the Methodist Industrial Missions, and they received increased public encouragement.

In 1850 William Case enlisted for his help at Alderville George William McDougall, who became a hero of the Indian Mission. At Alderville he gained a mastery of the vernacular, and equipped himself in other ways for pioneer work.

<sup>1</sup> Peter Jones had been designated for this post, but his health had begun to fail. He died in 1856—more than any other man the father of Methodism among the red men.

McDougall was a young man after Case's own heart—strong, active, intrepid, full of zeal and affection, and with a sound ballast of common sense. Previously engaged in Indian trading, his heart had been powerfully drawn toward the people. He was received into the ministry as a married man, because of his special fitness for missionary work. Mrs. McDougall was as well suited for, and as devoted to, the calling as her husband. On leaving Alderville, McDougall was sent, in 1851, to the Bruce Mines, at the north-western extremity of Lake Huron; from this point he pushed his operations forward to Saulte Sainte Marie, which had been occupied, under the name of 'Lake Superior,' twelve years earlier by James Evans. He quotes, in reporting his early experiences in this field, the pathetic speech of a Native chief at Garden River, which flows not far from the locality last-mentioned, begging that the children of his tribe might have the advantages of a 'paper' education and be trained in methods of agriculture, by way of compensation for the poverty to which the encroaching white man, with his steamboats and gunpowder, was fast reducing the helpless Indian. At Garden River McDougall subsequently fixed his head quarters; from this centre he exercised a wide itinerancy east and west.

The stimulus given to the missionary work for the Natives by the commercial reunion was quickly apparent. The *Report* for 1852 declares:

Possibly no one previous year could present more encouragement in the issue of those means which have been employed for the maintenance and enlargement of the work of God amongst our Indian brethren than the one which has just expired.

The two Industrial Schools were filled to overflowing; scarcely a week passed without the necessity of refusing applications for admittance.

The improved appearance of the children in the Institution [writes Case from Alderville] creates in the minds of their old associates a desire to be like them; and when I see the mortality which prevails among them arising from their ignorance and consequent vice and poverty, I cannot refrain from saying: 'Would to God that the means of support and instruction were equal to the calls for aid!'

In 1852 William Case, on whom the infirmities of age were creeping, resigned the Superintendency at Alderville; he was



succeeded by the very competent James Musgrove, who, until his death in 1863, presided in turn over that and the Mount Elgin establishment. Father Case remained in this endeared spot, surviving to complete the fiftieth year of his ministry and to hail the founding of the united and independent Methodist Conference of Canada. He passed to his rest on October 19, 1855, at the age of seventy-five. Thomas Hurlburt, returning from the States, reappears on the scene in 1852, drawn back to his former field by the encouraging outlook it now presented. He was appointed to Rice Lake Station, whence Robert Brooking was transferred to the River St. Clair. The Canadian Indian Mission was now more strongly manned than it had ever been before.

On the other hand the Hudson Bay Mission, which had been commenced with great ardour, and some flourish of trumpets, by the British Missionary Society in 1840, was reaching its lowest ebb. In 1852 William Mason was left the solitary English Missionary on the ground where six Missionaries had laboured ten years earlier. He reports good progress at Norway House and the adjoining Rossville, and deplors that the appeal of the Saskatchewan tribes for a successor to Robert Rundle is still denied. The outlying posts were all abandoned. It was probably his despair of help from Bishopsgate, and his judgement as to the uselessness of maintaining a Mission of skeleton proportions in so vast a field, that led Mason two years later to associate himself with the Church Missionary Society, which, following in the wake of the Methodist Mission, was prosecuting the same work with ampler resources and more sustained purpose ; he did not quit the field, but continued the fight under an allied flag.<sup>1</sup>

The crisis resulted in the transference of the Hudson Bay District to the Canadian Conference and the care of Enoch Wood, who nominated the experienced and stalwart Thomas Hurlburt to the Chairmanship, sending out with him a couple of picked men. These were Robert Brooking, who proved himself alike amidst tropical fevers and arctic frosts the brave soldier of Christ, and a man full of spiritual power and practical resource. By the side of Hurlburt and Brooking went Allen Salt, an Indian youth of Case's rearing and

<sup>1</sup> William Mason has an honourable record in the history of the C.M. Society. He was particularly serviceable in translation work.



with much of Case's spirit, concerning whom John Ryerson testified :

As a good man and a Christian Minister I very much esteem Mr. Salt. He grew daily in my affection and confidence during the month of our journeying together.

The veteran Ryerson greatly interested himself in the revival of the Indian Missions, and travelled all the way across the Hudson Bay District to Norway House and on to York Factory, whence he took ship for England. He saw his protégé, Salt, settled at Rainy Lake (Lac la Pluie)<sup>1</sup>; in other directions he sought to bring the great outlying field to the north and west into touch with the settled Mission work in Canada. Hurlburt on his arrival at Rossville found the Mission House, built by Evans and lately occupied by Mason, in good repair; he found also 'a Christian Society, far advanced in knowledge and practical piety.' Brooking was posted at Oxford House, an important trade-centre on the route from Norway House to York Factory, the company's port on Hudson Bay. This place had previously belonged to the Norway House Circuit. The faithful Steinhaur, the last left of the previous Mission staff, was taken from his schoolmastering into the ministry and sent to pick up the dropped threads of Rundle's weaving in the far west beneath the Rocky Mountains.

So a new beginning was made of the Hudson Bay Mission, which from this time has never looked back. Its salvation was due to the solid and fruitful character of the Indian work in Canada, which had been built up, out of slender resources, with so much wisdom, patience, and self-denying toil by men like Case, Hurlburt, and Stinson during the thirty years past. The Indian Church membership in 1855 had reached the figure of 2,000, scattered over some twenty Circuits and Stations, which extended along the northern frontier of the country bordering the great lakes. This limited constituency was animated, however, by a vigorous Church life, and represented a vastly greater number of adherents. It was a sifted and well-instructed membership—a solid yield for thirty years' cultivation of wilderness-ground. Great numbers of Indians

<sup>1</sup> Peter Jacobs was the missionary pioneer of this station, but left it in 1849, since which time it had remained vacant. This Native Minister, so long trusted and useful, in his last days suffered a sad moral eclipse.

had come within the sound of the Gospel and had received a tincture of sound teaching at the widespread Stations and Schools. They carried the seeds of Christian knowledge and of converting grace far beyond the Missionary's reach ; this seed sprang up again in distant regions, to be found after many days. The newer Missions of the Hudson Bay Territory suffered from the drawbacks of remoteness, from the absence of lay help and the lack of civilized appliances ; they had compensating advantages in the fact that the heathen were here found untouched by the contagion of European vice, and unprejudiced by the wrongs which white settlers are apt to inflict upon the Natives. The Hudson Bay Company was honourably distinguished for the equity of its dealings and the good morals maintained amongst its officers. The physical difficulties of space and climate, and the paucity of agents due to withholding of help from England, were the reasons why this Mission, which made so promising a beginning, and had for its apostle a hero and a genius in James Evans, at the end of fourteen years reported no more than 120 members, gathered round the single station of Rossville (Norway House).

Dr. Beecham, who made it his business to see as much as possible of the Indian Mission on his Canadian visitation in 1854, reported ' the result ' as

most satisfactory. In the case of the many Christian Indians of various tribes with which he was brought into intercourse, the Deputation had irresistible evidence that the Gospel becomes the power of God unto salvation when directly applied to the dark mind and heart of the barbarian. In the hands of faithful Missionaries it is capable of raising aboriginal people from the wretchedness and degradation of barbarous life to the condition of a Christian and civilized community ; and the review of the whole, according to his judgement, affords ample encouragement to the vigorous prosecution of missionary enterprise.

This sentence was pronounced by a very judicious and critical man. The experiment commenced by William Case and his helper a generation ago, in face of general scepticism as to the salvability of the North American Indian, had succeeded, if not yet on a large scale, yet in an abundant measure and amongst red men of the most diverse tribes. From this date the work of redemption went forward with renewed vigour and hope. The ground had been surveyed, the methods developed, and the agents trained and practised. The first

few years were the Pentecostal period of the Mission, when the unexpected effusion of the Holy Spirit, and the raising up of witnesses of extraordinary power, proved to an unbelieving Church that 'God had granted to the Gentiles also repentance unto life.' Then came the harder time of sifting and training ; in later years strife and disturbance, affecting the Churches both of Canada and of England, divided the hearts of fellow labourers in the Mission Field and weakened their hands. These troubles now passed away. In 1854 the new Canadian Conference, with its Church membership of 20,000, assisted still in contributions of men and means from the mother-country, took full missionary charge of the great province within its jurisdiction. The devolution justified itself increasingly as time went on.

Of work done by the Missionary Society for the aborigines of the British dominions outside of Canada and the Hudson Bay Territory there is little to tell. The *Beothuks* of Newfoundland were the first Natives of the continent encountered by European navigators ; from the practice this people had of smearing their bodies and their dwellings with red ochre the 'red men' are said to have acquired their name. Living as hunters and fishers in a climate far from genial, the Beothuks can never have been a thriving race. They showed considerable skill and industry in their rude arts. A comparatively simple and inoffensive folk when first discovered, and making no effectual resistance to the invaders, they suffered intolerable wrong and cruelty from the lawlessness that prevailed during the first century and a half of British sovereignty in Newfoundland (*government* it cannot be called). Helpless, and with no means of redress, the hapless victims withdrew to the interior of the island, henceforth avoiding all contact with white men except by way of predatory raids, in which they were shot down like wild beasts. For their souls no man cared. Under such conditions, the Beothuk tribes rapidly dwindled ; and when, in the later decades of the eighteenth century, the hinterland began to be explored, and attempts were made to conciliate them, the survivors evaded the search. The crossing over of bodies of Micmac Indians from the south of the St. Lawrence Gulf (see below), who were possessed of fire-arms, hastened the destruction of these indigenous people. More than once Native women were captured, who proved



tractable, and it was sought by their means to open up communications with their kinsfolk ; but all endeavours failed. Dr. Coke, whom nothing seems to have escaped, in 1809 begged John Remmington, on his appointment to Newfoundland, to seek out the remnant of the Beothuks ; he could find no means of doing so. They are referred to in the *Missionary Report* for 1820, where it is said in the paragraph relating to Newfoundland :

The attention of the public has lately been turned to the aboriginal inhabitants of the interior, and should an opening to these long isolated tribes occur, the brethren are directed to avail themselves of it to attempt their instruction.

But it was too late ! The last Beothuk is supposed to have disappeared about eighty years ago.<sup>1</sup> The fate of this injured race has left a sad stain on the story of British enterprise and colonization.

With the *Esquimaux* of Labrador Newfoundland Methodism was brought into contact through the summer fishing-expeditions to the southern coasts of that desolate country. The Moravians had been labouring in Labrador with success for fifty years previously, braving the severest hardships, when in 1820 the Wesleyan Missionary Society directed its agents, while caring for the aborigines of Newfoundland, at the same time 'to make inquiries as to the establishment of a Mission to the opposite coast of Labrador.' A little earlier, in 1818, William Ellis, then travelling in the Port de Grave Circuit, had baptized six members of an Esquimau family who had been brought to the knowledge of Christ through their intercourse with Methodists of Newfoundland. For the new Mission young Adam Clarke Avard, of the Fredericton Circuit in New Brunswick, volunteered his services ; but, alas, he sickened and died on the eve of his departure (in 1821). Not till three years later could the plans formed for Labrador be resumed ; and then it was only possible, out of the scanty Mission staff of Newfoundland, to spare James Hickson for a summer visit to Esquimaux Bay. In the following year (1825) Richard Knight, accompanied by a zealous layman, was dispatched

<sup>1</sup> For the story of this interesting and ill-used people, see *The Extinct Beothuks* (Camb. Univ. Press, 1915), by James P. Hewley, F.G.S.



across Belleisle Strait on the same errand. Hickson and Knight, who preached to the Natives through interpreters, and the latter of whom came into communication with the Moravians 300 miles to the north-east, both reported favourably of the disposition of the people, and recommended the planting of a permanent Mission. Accordingly the Newfoundland Synod of 1826 selected one of its number to establish the Labrador Station. The chosen man, however, demurred. 'I will not offer for Labrador,' he said; '*if I go, you send me!*' He was sent, and spent a winter with the Esquimaux, fixing his residence at Snook's Cove. Next spring, however, he returned, thoroughly disheartened; a second Missionary sent to supply his place came back with the same doleful tale. The testimony of these two men was quite at variance with that of the previous explorers. William Wilson, the author of *Newfoundland and its Missionaries*, who was in the island at the time, and himself volunteered for this forlorn hope, evidently believed that Hickson and Knight were correct in their sanguine estimate, and that if the Missionary Committee had persevered and found the right leader for the undertaking, it would have succeeded. However, after the double failure, the project was dropped, the *Missionary Report* of 1829 (Newfoundland) stating as reasons for its abandonment 'the scattered state of the different tribes, their migratory habits of life, and the paucity of their numbers.' Not till thirty years later was the Labrador Mission recommenced, under the auspices of the Conference of Eastern British America.

The Micmacs of Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and New Brunswick, who are akin to the Indians of Canada, number at present about 4,000; at one time probably they were much more numerous. Missioned by French priests during the Acadian period, the majority of them are Roman Catholics, and fairly civilized. They have lived since the time of the French dominion in scattered communities amongst the colonists, on terms, for the most part, of friendly intercourse with them, having lost their Native language and tribal constitution. The *Methodist Magazine* for February, 1815, contains the account of Schools established with the assistance of Government for the Indian children of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, in which the Methodists were greatly

interested ; the subsequent history of these institutions we are not able to trace. Here and there Indian families were attracted to Protestant congregations and Churches in the lower provinces, but no separate Mission has been carried on for their benefit.

## X

### CANADIAN REUNION AND CONSOLIDATION

Formally severed yet identified in Principle—The Ryerson Brothers—'Travelling Chairmen'—First Steps towards Reunion—Delegates to the British Conference—The Toronto Conference of 1847—Plan of Union adopted—Presidency of Dr. Richey—*The Christian Guardian* of Toronto—The Clergy Reserve Fund again—Union of Upper and Lower Canada in 1854—The Laity and the Church—Independent Methodism for British North America—Statistics—Death of William Case.

A COMMON interest in the salvation of the heathen had in the first instance drawn British and colonial Methodism together in Canada, and when dissension arose this interest kept the severed factions in communication and supplied motives and a meeting-ground for reconciliation. Men like William Case and Joseph Stinson, who on the disruption cast in their lot with the British, chiefly because of the ties between the Indian Missions and the Missionary Society, could not quarrel with their Canadian sons and brethren in the Gospel—with the Ryersons and Anson Green and Henry Wilkinson. Thomas Hurlburt, if taking his orders from another Conference, was in heart with his Canadian brothers Asahel and Sylvester; Peter Jones and John Sunday, amongst the Indians, must have felt that their separation was artificial, and to be undone with the least possible delay. Relentings began amongst the best men of both parties on the morrow of the rupture; within two or three years discussions arose, and overtures were made in the direction of reunion. The course of public events, and the conflict with common enemies, tended to assimilate in judgement and feeling the sundered parts of Western Canadian Methodism, so that by the year 1845, while formally disunited, they were more truly identified in principle than when ten years earlier they had worn the same ecclesiastical badge.

The sixty-nine Preachers left behind in the Canadian Conference, choosing as their President the venerable Thomas Whitehead, faced the future with a cheerful courage, and set

about reconstituting the Church on its contracted basis. The leaders were men who had passed through the former period of isolation (1828-33), and the readjustment of the Church machinery was speedily effected. While the section cut off from the Canadian Conference greatly needed assistance toward its missionary progress, its future was guaranteed by the fact that it retained the confidence of the bulk of the Methodists of the provinces and the sympathy of the colonial public at large. The 'Missionary District' disappears from the Canadian *Minutes* of 1840, the Indian Stations retained by the Conference being attached to the nearest colonial Circuits, otherwise the number and distribution of the Districts were unaltered, though the list of Chairmen underwent many changes in consequence of the British withdrawals. In a number of cases neighbouring Circuits were amalgamated to make them workable by the depleted staff. Every man was put upon his mettle, and the utmost energy prevailed throughout the Church during the year ensuing, so that, despite the loss of some 2,000 members through the British secession, the Conference of 1841 was cheered by an increase of 663 in its Church constituency. The colonial Circuit work was maintained with increasing liberality; but the missionary treasury, formerly fed by subventions from England, was soon empty; the Canadian Missionaries were reduced to grievous straits, some of them in their lonely outposts 'bordering on starvation.' They bravely held to their work, but advance was out of the question. Their case was the saddest feature of the new situation.

William Ryerson became President of the Conference of 1841, while Anson Green, who had played a conspicuous part in the recent crisis, was put into the Secretary's seat. 'The seven years of independency' marked 'the culmination of the ascendancy of the Ryerson brothers in the Canada Conference. . . . While every one of them shared, more or less, in the abilities possessed by the rest, each was distinguished by one prominent quality. William's eloquence and laboriousness, John's resolute and controlling administrative power and determination, and Egerton's capacity in planning, engrossing, expounding, and defending Connexional measures and proceedings, both by tongue and pen, made them in combination a very formidable triumvirate, and conspired to



impress the character of the family on the Connexion.' In 1842, when Anson Green succeeded to the presidential chair, it was resolved to attach the District Chairmen to Circuits; hitherto they had held a roving commission within their provinces, like the American Presiding Elders, to whose functions they succeeded in Canada.<sup>1</sup> The President, however, was left free from other charge that he might itinerate amongst the Churches and exercise a general oversight. At the same time a 'missionary Agent' was appointed, in the person of William Ryerson, who was required to travel in similar fashion in promotion of the Connexional Mission work. Opinion was much divided on the question of settled *versus* travelling Chairmen; the resolution of 1842 on the subject was revoked in 1844, to be put in force again three years later. This Conference raised the number of Districts from five to seven. At the same date the Cobourg Academy was raised to collegiate status, being empowered by the Legislature to confer degrees, under the title of 'The Victoria College';<sup>2</sup> Egerton Ryerson was appointed its Principal. Arrangements were made for ministerial probationers to take a course of instruction here, and two young Preachers were allowed to leave their Circuits for this purpose.<sup>3</sup> This beginning of training for the ministry in Canada followed closely upon the opening of the Theological Institution in England. The Connexional year of 1841-42 was one of great blessing, yielding the largest increase to the colonial Church membership—close upon 4,000—hitherto reported in any single year. Manifestly Canadian Methodism was not destined to wither through its severance from the parent stock.

In this year the first definite steps were taken towards the restoration of the union. Anson Green writes:

From the beginning Brother John Ryerson and I sorely lamented the breaking down of the Conference tie between us and England, and our

<sup>1</sup> The P.E. model was expensive, and tended, it was thought, to give disproportionate ascendancy to a few men in Conference.

<sup>2</sup> Victoria College was in later years transferred to Toronto, where it now stands in affiliation to the State University; it is a powerful and well-staffed institution, with hundreds of students in the main branches of arts and science, as well as of divinity.

<sup>3</sup> It still continues the general practice in Canada to employ candidates for the ministry as assistants in Circuit work, and thus put them to trial before admitting them to the theological Colleges. This is the more necessary as the office of Local Preacher is largely in abeyance in America, so that prospective candidates have little opportunity for exercising and testing their gifts as preachers in this capacity.

Ministers generally sympathized with us in these feelings. We were therefore sent to New York, on May 4, to meet Bishop Soule, the American Representative to the English Conference, and ask his friendly influence to induce that body to refer the entire question of our separation to the arbitrament of the American Episcopate.

This proposal does not appear to have been made to the home Conference ; it would hardly have been welcome, for at the back of the whole Canadian difficulty there lay the old jealousy between British and American interests in Canada. About the same time Anson Green wrote to Dr. Alder suggesting a geographical partition between the Circuits of the British and Canadian Conferences, and that the two Churches should receive members passing over from the one to the other only with a recommendation furnished by the previous Minister to the party desiring the transfer. Alder intimated at this time that the Romanizing of the High Anglicans was alienating Wesleyan sympathies from the Church of England and inclining the British chiefs to judge more favourably the anti-Establishment policy pursued in Canada. He advised that Green and John Ryerson should visit the British Conference of 1843 ; this they actually did three years later. Before long Anson Green broke down under what he describes as the ' unparalleled toil and care ' which ' came upon a few of us during the anxious period ' of the suspended union ; for four and a half years (1844-49) he was unable to use his voice in preaching. Along with others of the more moderate Canadians he continued to work quietly for reunion, being convinced that English Methodism was coming round to the Canadian point of view. ' I am doing what I can,' he writes to Egerton Ryerson, ' to bring about a reconciliation ; but I find some parties on both sides who, like Samson's foxes, are willing to scatter firebrands, but do nothing to quench them. . . . I can fight with the World, for it is evil ; with the Flesh, for it is lustful ; and with the Devil, for he is hateful ; but I find it hard to fight with my Wesleyan brethren, even when I think that they are wrong.'

John Ryerson filled the chair of the Conference of 1843 ; his masterfulness had naturally grown with years, and excited in some quarters a resentment which the deep respect felt for his character did not wholly conceal. Egerton Ryerson's impulsiveness and incurable love of politics gave rise to trouble

during the ensuing year. The Provincial Governor, Sir Charles Metcalf, who was friendly towards the Methodists and had taken Egerton Ryerson into his confidence, came into conflict with the local Parliament, bringing upon himself a shower of pamphlets. Believing the Governor to be unjustly attacked, Ryerson used his powerful pen in defence. His action gave much offence to the Liberal Party, with which he had been long associated, and many Methodists shared in the disapproval passed upon him. The English Tractarian Movement was at this time stimulating the Canadian Anglicans to aggressive activity; while the Millerite delusion, propagated from New England, greatly agitated simple Methodist folk in Canada, as in the lower provinces. These unfavourable influences, acting from various sides, checked the rapid progress which Methodism had been making for several years past; the Conference of 1844 reported an increase reduced to 438—in the previous year it had been nine times as large. The following Conference (1845) saw the above small increment turned into an actual decline. Richard Jones presided over the former assembly, Henry Wilkinson over the latter. The Church membership now stood at something under 23,000, where it remained stationary for several years. The membership reported in the British District (of Western Canada) was about 3,000 in number; but small advance had been made since the separation, although the British Missionaries showed praiseworthy activity, and were continually occupying new stations. George Frederick Playter—an Englishman by birth, who is described as ‘almost slavishly devoted to study’—in 1844 succeeded Jonathan Scott as editor of the *Guardian*, in the conduct of which he was eminently diligent and cautious, and strictly impartial. He subsequently wrote an accurate and judicious history of early Canadian Methodism, from which we have freely drawn in these pages.

The Conference of 1844 was embarrassed by Egerton Ryerson's fresh plunge into political controversy. Having failed to reprimand earlier demonstrations on the Liberal side, it could not censure his interference in what was taken to be the contrary interest without the appearance of partisanship. Yet the occurrence was too conspicuous and disturbing to pass unnoticed. The Conference took the occasion,



therefore, to affirm its political neutrality, and formulated the resolution :

That, while we disclaim all intention of controlling the political sentiments of any of our Ministers or members, so long as those sentiments do not contravene the discipline of our Church nor contradict the Word of God, we will not, as a body, be responsible for the political doctrines of any Minister or member of our Conference or Church, or any party in the country, but leave our people perfectly free to exercise their own judgement in political and civil affairs.

This guarded attitude did not satisfy the more decided Methodist politicians, who held the professed indifference of the Conference to be inconsistent with its former pronouncements affecting the relations of Church and State. The Connexion was weary of political strife.

This Conference returned to the plan of travelling Chairmen. The Districts were consequently reduced in number from seven to six, and the general superintendency of the President was discontinued. Larger powers of control were restored to the Chairman ; the office of Missionary Agent was also abolished. John Carroll<sup>1</sup> and James Musgrove were now raised to the rank of District Chairmen. The latter was becoming by this time a notable power in the Conference,

and so continued to the end of his life. He had proved a correct business man, and had grown to be a commanding Preacher, and a bold and forcible debater. His fearlessness and opposition to anything like the government of a clique gave him the suffrages of the rank and file of the Conference.<sup>2</sup>

*The Wesleyan*, the official organ of the British Methodists of Eastern and Western Canada, ceased to appear about this time.\* A new paper was started by a circle connected with Toronto, who sought to identify the Conference with Egerton Ryerson's recent defence of the Provincial Governor and to voice the opinions of Conservative Methodism. This organ,

<sup>1</sup> The compiler of the invaluable records published under the title of *Case and His Contemporaries*, which are frequently quoted in the present work.

<sup>2</sup> *Case, &c.*, Vol. IV., pp. 423-4.

\* The offices of *The Wesleyan* had been removed on the dissolution of the union from Montreal to Toronto ; there it maintained an active though not unkindly warfare with the *Guardian*. Before long it succumbed in the unequal contest. J. G. Manly was the editor at this period. Ill-health compelled this Minister to remove to the West Indies in 1843 ; subsequently he exchanged the *Wesleyan* for the Congregational ministry.



which took the name of *The Toronto Periodical Journal* or *Wesleyan Methodist*, although it espoused the cause of lay delegation,<sup>1</sup> never acquired a popular circulation; it came to serve the interests later on of the Methodist New Connexion—a Church which, aided by seceders from Wesleyan ranks, had by this time become ‘thoroughly organized and placed on a respectable footing in the country.’ The Canadian Conference gave expression to the growing desire for reunion with the parent Methodist Church by the appointment of a strong Committee, in response to an official communication on the subject from England, ‘with power to decide upon all matters of difference’ between itself and the British Conference. Egerton Ryerson and Peter Jones were both across the Atlantic at this time—the former preparing by travelling in Europe for the post of Superintendent of Public Education<sup>2</sup> in Upper Canada, to which he had been designated by the local Government; the latter engaged in soliciting funds for the projected Indian Industrial Schools. Ryerson’s lengthened absence was favourable to peace in Canadian Methodism; the political storm he had provoked a year or two earlier had time to die down.

The rivalries of the several Methodist bodies in Canada, though comparatively free from bitterness, gave increasing distress both to the lovers of unity and to practical business minds jealous for economy. Discussion on the subject was revived in the *Guardian*, where the editor associated arguments for reunion with his plea for the launching of a Mission to *China*, proposals for which had lately been received with some favour in Canada. Unfortunately, in pressing his arguments against competition, Playter was led to animadvert upon the outlay of the Missionary Society, which (as it was made to appear) had spent on its Indian work during the five years of separate operations in Canada sums of money quite disproportionate to the results achieved. The British party were annoyed at this comparison; and W. M. Harvard, who was now

<sup>1</sup> Wesleyan laymen generally were satisfied with the power of veto on new legislation possessed by the Quarterly Meetings.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. E. Ryerson, who was recognized as the ablest public man in Canada, held this post, to the great advantage of the colony, for the rest of his life. The appointment signaled the final defeat of the attempts of the Anglicans to dominate education in Upper Canada. The chagrin of this party was indicated by the *Church* newspaper, which denounced the appointment as ‘an impolitic and heartless step,’ describing Ryerson as ‘an individual who has thriven upon his political obliquities, and who owes his fame to his unquenchable dislike to the national Church!’

the British Missionary in Toronto, replied to the disparaging reflections at great length in letters addressed to the *Guardian*, on which the editor made frank comments by way of self-defence. By this discussion 'the old unpleasantness was raked up and revived.' Harvard was always gentlemanly; Playter was cool and philosophical; and the controversy, which lasted six months, conducted as it was in good temper, caused less irritation than might have been expected. It resulted, however, in Playter's resignation of the editorship; 'he was offered up,' it was said at the time, 'a sacrifice to appease British Methodism' and facilitate reunion. In his place George Rivers Sanderson—then quite a young man, laborious, cultivated, and able—took over the editorship at the Conference of 1846. He 'declared a truce between contending correspondents' in the newspaper, 'to the relief of both parties in the Church.'

The numerical decrease of membership reported at this Conference, and now recurring for a second year, was received with 'blank astonishment, fall of countenance, and weeping.' The shrinkage looked the more serious in face of the growth of population and the secular advance which the colony was making. James Musgrove had the courage to lay the chief part of the blame for this decline upon the ill consequences of the political animus and contentiousness exhibited by some leading Conference men. The sentiment in favour of Methodist union showed itself strongly preponderant; but it was decided to seek reconciliation with the British Conference before proposing alliance to the other Methodist bodies of Canada. John Ryerson and Anson Green were selected as delegates to England with this object in view. Several circumstances concurred to mark the present as an opportune hour for peace-making. The British Evangelical Alliance, which sought to unite in counsel and action the different Churches in the Empire, was in course of formation (the two brethren above-named represented Canadian Methodists at the inception of this body). The Presbyterian disruption in Scotland, and the Romeward gravitation of the Tractarian party in the Church of England, had both contributed to shake Wesleyan attachment to the principle of State establishment. Referring to these events, Dr. Jabez Bunting was reported to have said to Egerton Ryerson, in the course of friendly interviews recently held

between the two: 'We have come down a little, and our Canadian brethren appear to have moved up!' Moreover, a certain Dr. Thompson, an influential agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society, recently visiting Canada, had brought home a report, tinged perhaps with exaggeration, of 'the deplorable state of weakness and deformity' resulting to Methodism in that country from its divisions, and had communicated his impressions to Methodist leaders in England.

The Canadian representatives were at first disconcerted by Secretary Alder's chilling reception at the Mission House, which was out of keeping with the tone of his cordial letters to Canada. It appeared as though the defeat he had suffered in Canada years ago still rankled in his memory. They found friends, however, in the Conference, held this year at Bristol. William Lord, the former Canadian President, and Joseph Stinson, now stationed in England, showed them the kindest attention. The President, William Atherton, took care to apologize for Alder's discourtesy; he secured for the Canadians a place of honour on the Conference platform, and gave them a proper introduction to the Assembly. 'It is due to Dr. Alder to say,' writes Green, 'that from this time forward his conduct towards us was respectful, affable, and kind.' John Ryerson, telling the story in a private letter, speaks of the great difficulty of securing any meeting with the Missionary Secretaries before Conference, and their non-committal attitude and apparent lack of interest in the question of reunion. He says the delegates were 'two whole weeks' at Conference before 'the least opening appeared' for the statement of their business; that meanwhile 'the Preachers were civil, but cold and distant' towards them. At this stage, fearing a complete repulse, Ryerson insisted on a private interview with Dr. Alder, at which he went fully and unreservedly into the history and present situation of the case as between the two Conferences, clearing up misunderstandings and pointing out the mistakes which had been made, and the losses incurred, upon both sides. Alder met his representations reasonably and fairly; and he attributes to this discussion the more favourable turn which events took. Before Conference closed the Canadian delegates had the hearing they desired; their appeal received a friendly but guarded response, and the question was referred to a suitable Special Committee, with power to act.



This Committee met during the following September in London. Matthew Richey, who was at this period the Chairman of the British District of Eastern Canada stationed in Montreal, represented the views of the British Methodists in Canada. Marsden, Lord, and Stinson<sup>1</sup> played the part of negotiators. Gradually the stiffness of British prejudice, induced by former disputes, relaxed towards the colonials; and a plan of reunion was arrived at—amounting substantially to a reaffirmation of the Articles of Union adopted in 1833—which the two Canadians were able to carry home with satisfaction.

The Committee [writes Anson Green] gave us a good dinner in the Centenary Hall, and expressed the pleasure they had derived from our visit. Dr. Alder having completely redeemed himself, we thought him the best man to come to Canada, and we asked the Conference [?Missionary Committee] to appoint him our President, which they did.

So the old combatants parted good friends once more.

The Canadian Conference of 1846 having declared its readiness to resume the union with the British Conference upon the old terms as soon as the latter should consent thereto, there was no legal necessity, it appeared, for submitting the proposals made to that effect to the verdict of the Quarterly Meetings of the Church. In view of former experiences it was deemed advisable, however, that such reference should be made. The *Examiner* newspaper<sup>2</sup> poured contemptuous abuse on the proceedings, and four prominent members of the Canadian Conference jointly issued a pamphlet expressing their vehement protest. The scheme of union secured, notwithstanding, the approval of a majority of the Circuits. 'A portion of our people, and the more pious and consistent among the missionary (British) party, were much pleased; but others, on both sides of the house, were displeased, disappointed, and warlike. . . . All things considered, the opposition to our diplomacy was weak, if not contemptible.' So writes Anson Green. The Committee which had been appointed in the previous year to

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Stinson, who had been prominent on the British side in the discussions of 1839-40, and became the Chairman of British Western Canada, withdrew to England in 1842, where he remained till after the reunion of 1847.

<sup>2</sup> The Liberal secular press of Canada interested itself greatly in the question of Methodist union. It was animated by distrust of Dr. Alder and the British Methodists, to whom it ascribed 'High Church' proclivities. The fear was that the amalgamation would neutralize the 'Liberal' tendencies of Canadian Methodism.



receive the report of the delegates, after due explanation, was satisfied and everything was in train, on the Canadian side, for laying the plan of reunion before the Conference of 1847.

Meanwhile negotiations were opened with the leaders of the local British Methodists. In a few places 'brotherly amenities' were at once exchanged, and friendly wishes expressed; but in the first instance the prospect of amalgamation was generally unwelcome on this side. 'The truth is,' writes Anson Green, 'they thought their cause was rising, and that the Canadian cause was declining.' Referring to the work at Kingston, a well-informed witness testified: 'We laboured side by side agreeably, though the British had little expectation and less desire for union.'<sup>1</sup> Their official Board in Kingston was very much against it; but Dr. Alder, on meeting them, not (as he said) officially, but for conversation, overruled all their objections. Dr. Alder, who arrived some time before the Conference, had come determined to repair the mischief done seven years ago and to see his handiwork of 1833 restored. He had doubtless penetrated the designs of the aristocratic colonial party, glad to see Methodism weakened by division, by whom he had been influenced on his previous visit. Moreover, he and the Conservative Methodist leaders at home were by this time out of love with the Church of England, and no longer looked with their former displeasure on the uncompromising resistance of the colonials to Anglican claims. The more combative amongst the British-Canadian Methodists perceived that they would not be supported from England in standing out against the proposed agreement; under Dr. Alder's persuasions they, too, were prepared to fall into line with the movement for reunion.

The eventful Canada Conference of 1847 met at Toronto in June, with William Ryerson for its President, James Musgrove for Secretary. The returned delegates to England took a pride in showing courtesy to Alder and Richey,<sup>2</sup> and 'heaped' on the head of the former 'coals of fire.' The debate on the scheme of union framed in London extended over the greater part of a

<sup>1</sup> The British Synod of 1846 recorded in its *Minutes*, sent to the Missionary Committee in London, its conviction that the spiritual interests of this fine country are, 'to a greater extent than can well be understood by distant observers, entrusted by God to the British Wesleyan ministry. They plead accordingly for 'the immediate supply of at least six additional labourers.'

<sup>2</sup> Enoch Wood, whom Dr. Alder had brought along with him from New Brunswick to be Superintendent of Missions, was also present. The three were introduced to the Conference as soon as it was constituted, and invited to assist in its deliberations.

week. After other critical points had been settled, the conflict between the two parties turned on the minor question of the mode of appointment and the powers of the District Chairmen. The Plan of Union adhered to the established Canadian usage, that these officers should be selected by the President of Conference, assisted by an Advisory Council, and should be free from Circuit responsibilities in order to exercise duties of general visitation and supervision. The opposition contended for their selection in full Conference and their limitation to the Circuit pastorate. At the suggestion of Alder a compromise was accepted on this question, and it was determined that while the mode of appointment remained unchanged, the Chairmen should share with their brethren in Circuit duties. With this alteration, the Plan of Union was adopted by a majority of ten to one in the final veto.

At that point the members of the British Synod, holding session simultaneously in the city, were admitted to the Conference. Tears of joy were shed over the reconciliation.

All fell to prayer. Never did truth and peace achieve a more complete victory. . . . There was never a measure in Canada fraught with so many difficulties, surrounded with so many conflicting interests, and where so many parties, both in England and in this country, had to be consulted, which was invested with more importance to the community at large, or one the settlement of which produced more beneficial results. . . . Old sores were healed, old conflicts forgotten ; in a very short time no one was found rash enough to regret the change, or belligerent enough to desire a return to our former position.<sup>1</sup>

Anson Green reports :

The sundered parties came together cordially, and old fellow-labourers shook hands again with tearful eyes. Good old Father Case embraced me cordially, saying with much emotion : ' Well done, my boy ! You have accomplished what I thought I should never live to see ; and I don't know how to thank you and brother Ryerson enough for your courage and zeal in undertaking a work so difficult and hopeless, and for your toil and prudence in bringing it to this happy issue.' Our Missionary Meeting on Monday evening was a joyous occasion. Here, as in former years, stood side by side Richey and Ryerson, Case and Green, Jones and Sunday, pleading the same cause. . . . We were out of debt, united, and happy !

<sup>1</sup> See *Case and His Contemporaries*, Vol. V., p. 3. ' The second union,' Carroll adds, ' although not carried in the Canadian Conference with the same apparent unanimity as the first, proved vastly more harmonious and complete.'

It is sad to remember that while this delightful fraternization was taking place in the new Methodism of the West, the conflict in British Methodism which issued in the calamitous rupture of 1849 was growing more and more exasperated.

The Canadian Missions were placed again on the basis laid down in 1833, being divided into two branches, Indian and Domestic, the latter embracing pioneer stations amongst European settlers. A sum of £600 was put at the disposal of the Canadian Conference for the Domestic Missions, of which it was to have sole direction; and an annual grant of £1,000 was to be made from England supplementing what the Canadian Missionary Society should raise on behalf of the Indian work. Dr. Alder took the chair of the United Conference now constituted; Matthew Richey was elected (according to constitution) co-delegate, and discharged Presidential duties for the rest of the year, Alder returning to England soon after the close of the Conference. William M. Harvard, the late Chairman of the (British) Western Canadian District, now returned to the English work. Enoch Wood, at Alder's request, was made 'Superintendent of Missions,' to act in this capacity for the British Missionary Society and the Canada Conference jointly; he proved 'a great gain to the Canadian Conference on account of his wisdom, weight of character, and tendency to sympathize with colonial interests.' In course of time he became quite the most influential person in the Canadian Connexion. Amongst the valuable men now acceding from the British ranks in Upper Canada were Edmund Botterell, James Booth, Robert Brookings, and, above all, Samuel Dwight Rice. Three young British Missionaries received ordination along with the Canadian candidates, and five probationers were also taken over. In most Circuits where there had been rival churches, a Minister from each side was stationed to facilitate the fusion. The number of Districts remained unchanged; a Canadian Chairman was set at the head of each, who was empowered, for the current year, to travel throughout the District to see to the adjustment of formerly divided Societies. William and John Ryerson were appointed to the London and Hamilton Districts respectively; Wilkinson to Toronto; Richard Jones to Cobourg; Bevitt to Kingston; and Musgrove to Bytown (Ottawa) District. Sanderson was re-elected Editor of the *Guardian*; Anson Green continued in the office of Book-



steward. Case remained at Alderville in charge of the Indian Industrial School, with William Ames for Assistant. The Indian Missionary District of 1833-40 was not re-formed; the several Mission Stations remained in the jurisdiction of the containing or contiguous District areas. Dr. Egerton Ryerson was lent to the service of the provincial Government, acting as Chief Superintendent of Schools 'by permission of the Conference.'

A handful of British irreconcilables, including two or three Preachers of Anglican leanings, betook themselves to the Church of England rather than consent to the union. The Methodist New Connexion received some accessions amongst the discontented of the opposite way of thinking. These losses, though in several instances regrettable, were far less numerous than had been expected. Other hindrances to Methodist progress, such as have been already referred to, continued to operate, and the first year after the reunion was one of little visible advance. From this date, however, the tide turned. The economy of forces effected by combination, the ceasing of local friction and the enrichment of Church life, made for growth and effectiveness. The spirit of Methodism revived, and its popular influence was strengthened. Political strife throughout the colony had become less bitter, and party feeling was softened in the Church, if it did not wholly disappear.

Dr. James Dixon, the President appointed from England for the Conference of 1848, helped to consolidate the union. He was a striking personality—a man of both liberal and lofty mind, endowed with commanding intellect and incisiveness of speech, whose presence and utterances enhanced the dignity of the Conference and conciliated all parties. John Carroll describes him, from the Canadian point of view, as

One of those book-loving, reflective men who have a right judgment of practical matters when brought before them. The Conference found him wise, deliberate, and capable; although blunt and sometimes wanting a little in patience, he was simple-minded, fair, and honest to a degree. His preaching, eschewing all pretences, was fresh, original, profound, and full of unction; gloriously independent of pulpit conventionalities, it scintillated with the coruscations of true genius.

On his return home Dixon reported of the Canadian Preachers—'many, probably half,' of whom 'are Englishmen'—'laborious and diligent in their work, men of good sense and



sound piety, much attached to all the distinctive characteristics of Methodism . . . and prepared to endure much privation' in the prosecution of their calling. 'Their chapels, schools, and institutions' he described as 'numerous and on a respectable scale; their Circuits pervade the entire country, embracing the back-settlements and outposts as well as the cities and towns. The character and moral influence of the Church are such as to command the respect of the entire community.' In fact Wesleyan Methodism filled in Upper Canada by this time a larger place in proportion to the population, and was a more formative element in the life of the country, than in any other English-speaking land.

Dr. Richey, as in the previous year, filled the place of co-delegate and Vice-President, Alder and Dixon in succession being summoned to England at the conclusion of their Conference duties. Richey was the acting Chief of the Connexion, and admirably discharged his office. For the next two years (1849-50) he was himself President. 'His labours' during this important period 'were apostolic . . . and his influence truly episcopal.'<sup>1</sup> Conrad Vandusen—a Minister of Canadian birth and Scotch-Dutch extraction, 'a man of great physical vigour, some education, and extraordinary zeal'<sup>2</sup>—was Secretary of the Conference for 1848-49. Every department of Connexional work was pursued with vigour and hopefulness throughout the year, and most of the Circuits reported at its end additions to their membership. In some Churches, however, the union had brought together antagonistic elements, from whose contention the Societies suffered for a considerable time. Here and there the 'fly-sheet' agitation, then at its height in England, awakened disturbing echoes. But a total augmentation over the whole field of 425 members appeared in the returns for 1848, and of 774 for the year 1849, from which date the gains of the Church rapidly increased.

In 1850 Samuel S. Nelles, M.A.—a scholar of Canadian breeding, then but twenty-seven years of age—was placed at the head of the Victoria College, which since Egerton Ryerson's

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Richey suffered from a carriage accident in Toronto, which left him with impaired strength. He removed to Halifax, where he did useful work, presiding over the Nova Scotia District for several years; but he was never again the man he had been before 1851.

<sup>2</sup> This greatly esteemed Minister entered the itinerancy in 1830. He had been the only convert of a dull camp-meeting, 'from which he went home to kindle a great revival' in his own neighbourhood.

Principalship had fallen into an enfeebled and precarious state. Nelles undertook the task with reluctance, but he quickly restored the prestige of this important institution, starting it on a new era of prosperity and directing its affairs for many years.<sup>1</sup> The Canadian Missionary Committee at last found itself clear of debt,<sup>2</sup> and was in a position to augment its grants and to give a new impetus to the Indian work. The reports of Church membership showed at the Conference of 1850 an increase of 1,170.

The Conference of 1851 raised Enoch Wood to the President's chair, which he occupied for seven years in succession, seeing the Affiliated Conference of Canada launched on its course. To none so much as to this able, sagacious, and noble-spirited man is the consolidation of Methodism in the Canadian dominion due, and the prosperity of its Missions, which greatly expanded from the middle of the century onwards. A lay Methodist, who had been absent from the province for some years, chancing to be in Toronto during the sessions of the Conference of 1850, conveys thus his impressions :

One of the first and most pleasing features of the Conference was the harmony that dwelt among the brethren ; one heart seemed to pervade the whole. They had no *party* purposes to serve. One rejoiced to witness the spirit and simplicity which reigned throughout.

It was well that the Church at this epoch was at peace and in good heart for its work, for the colony had entered on an era of extraordinary progress. The commercial depression of the later forties had passed away ; trade rapidly increased, and the tide of immigration set in with fresh vigour ; new settlements were constantly being formed and new lands coming under the plough. The advance of Methodism at this period more than kept pace with the development of the colony ; the pioneer Missionary followed the settler wherever he went. More than 100 probationers were ordained by Wood's hands during his Presidency, and scarcely a Sabbath passed in which he was not employed in consecrating new churches. George Sanderson was succeeded at this Conference in the editorship of the

<sup>1</sup> The wife of Dr. Nelles (as this distinguished collegian afterwards became) was a daughter of Enoch Wood.

<sup>2</sup> Five years earlier, in 1845, it had been said that the Missionary Society of the Canadian Conference was the only body of its kind in the world that was *out of debt*—a condition due, apparently, to its lack of outlet (see *Case, &c.*, IV., 461). The 'empty treasury' of 1841 had been refilled, but again depleted !

*Guardian* by James Spencer, who was even more successful than his predecessor in the elimination of controversy. Spencer was 'bound to have peace even if he fought for it ! For several years it had been thought meritorious, on the part of many persons and papers, to keep up a carping criticism of Wesleyan Methodist affairs,' but Spencer put an end to this by the exercise of a gift of courteous but telling sarcasm, of which troublesome disputants learned to beware. He made the *Guardian*, moreover, a decided and trenchant temperance organ.

It may seem strange that so much notice should be taken of a weekly newspaper in writing missionary history ; the fact is that this journal, from the time of its foundation by Egerton Ryerson, played a conspicuous and truly missionary part in the Methodism of British North America. Mistakes were made in its conduct from time to time ; but rarely has any organ of the Press served its Church so well. *The Christian Guardian* of Toronto commanded attention and respect from all classes of the community, and secured for Wesleyan Methodism in its struggling days a dignified standing in the colony, while it exerted a steadying religious influence on public life and morals generally. In view of the valuable services rendered by this newspaper, the discouragement of the British missionary authorities of Methodist journalism in the eastern colonies appears the more regrettable.

At this date Upper Canada contained something over 800,000 souls ; of these 140,000 were reckoned as Methodist adherents. Yet the Conservative Government just then in power, in a Bill for the permanent disposal of the Clergy Reserve Fund which it presented to the Canadian Legislature, proposed to assign the bulk of the large revenues accruing from this source to the Anglican Church, setting apart, amongst other minor distributions, the sum of £700 *per annum* to assist the Wesleyan Missions to the Indians and Destitute Settlers. The latter bounty was a continuation of the grants-in-aid which had been received for this purpose for many years, in varying amounts and from varying sources, by the Wesleyan Missionary Society. The Canadian Conference expressed its strong dissatisfaction at the provisions of the above measure. It disapproved of concurrent endowment, 'and would far sooner devote the entire reservation to the general interests of the province' ; but at the same time it pointed out the meagre share of the fund



allotted to the Church which 'employed by far the largest as well as the oldest body of Protestant clergymen in Upper Canada, and exercised pastoral control over 1,000 congregations.' The Conference

records its solemn protest against any measure for any endowment or grant in perpetuity to the Church of England or Scotland, not secured upon equal conditions to every Protestant denomination in Upper Canada.<sup>1</sup>

This unrighteous proposal was defeated; the protest against it was the last declaration which the Conference had occasion to make on this long-vexed subject. The political agitations which had centred in 'the Clergy Reserves' ceased to disturb the peace of the Connexion. Revivals were experienced in all parts of the province—in the two Toronto Circuits alone, during the year 1851-52, over 700 new members were gathered in from this cause; missionary meetings were thronged and enthusiastic; the Circuits were busy with church building and restoration; 'in a word, vitality and hope seemed to pulsate through the entire body.'

The one matter of controversy exercising the Canadian Methodists at this time was itself a symptom of the advanced development of the Church and its ripening for a self-complete existence. A plan was adopted at the Conference for having the Connexional Funds and associations—including the Missionary, the Church Relief, the Book-Room, and other financial interests—incorporated, so as to make the properties concerned more secure and more easily handled. Such incorporation could only be effected by Act of Parliament; and a Bill for the purpose was duly prepared and laid before the House of Assembly. The Bill was opposed, however, by petitions proceeding from a comparatively small number of Methodists, who took alarm at the objections raised in certain organs of the secular Press habitually suspicious of the designs of 'clerical' bodies. The disconcerting rebuff turned the thoughts of Canadian Methodist leaders more decidedly toward lay representation in Conference,<sup>2</sup> for the misapprehensions

<sup>1</sup> Anson Green's *Life and Times*, pp. 334 ff.

<sup>2</sup> A compromise was secured at the time by the passage of such parts of the Bill in question as related to property belonging to *the ministers alone*. The chief part of the Connexional Funds were thus left out of the Act of Incorporation, to the great inconvenience and loss of the Church. This disadvantage was remedied when, years afterwards, the admission of laymen to the Canadian Conference put the Conference in a position to approach the Legislature again upon the subject.



occurring in this case were such as could not have arisen on the action of an Assembly representing all orders of the Church. It came to be seen that both equity and prudence dictated the inclusion of the laity in a Conference which had the power to dispose of the material property of the Church, and controlled matters coming under the cognizance of the Civil Government. The lesson thus learnt bore fruit in after days. Under Enoch Wood's direction, the Conference of 1851 had already instituted the Financial District Meeting, after the example of British Methodism.

The history of this matter proves that Ministers may be stupidly opposed to reasonable lay co-operation, and laymen may be unreasonably suspicious of their Ministers. But the true way to disarm that suspicion is to give the laymen information of, and a voice in, all general interests of the Church.<sup>1</sup>

The Methodist communities of Lower and Upper Canada, ecclesiastically separated since the year 1820, had now for some time gravitated toward each other. The Synod of the East Canada District, over which Enoch Wood presided by appointment from England, at its meeting early in May, 1853, decided by a unanimous vote to address overtures of union to 'the Wesleyan Methodist Conference in Canada.' This resolution was presented to the Canada Conference in the following month by John Jenkins, the British Chairman for Eastern Canada,<sup>2</sup> accompanied by John Borland and James Brook, two of his fellow Missionaries. The Committee appointed to meet the eastern delegates reported in favour of the proposed union, and their report was adopted by the Conference. The plan in contemplation was remitted to the British Conference, and is referred to in the annual address of the latter body to the Canadian Conference in the following terms of consent :

We have heard with great satisfaction of the desire which exists on the part of the Ministers and members of our Churches in the Eastern Canada District to be incorporated with the Western Canada Conference. We believe that the consummation of this purpose will greatly

<sup>1</sup> *Case and his Contemporaries*, Vol. V., pp. 109, 110.

<sup>2</sup> Of John Jenkins, now of eighteen years' standing in the ministry, who had previously seen service in India and Malta, it is said : ' A man more purely English, or more correct and charming in the intonations and inflexions of his fine and flexible voice, is seldom to be met with.' His gifts resembled those of his more distinguished nephew, Ebenezer E. Jenkins.

increase the stability and usefulness of Wesleyan Methodism in your country. We cordially approve of the steps you have already taken with reference to this matter ; and we have great pleasure in assuring you that all suitable means will be employed by us to complete this most desirable arrangement as speedily as possible.

Thus the unification which the British Mission House had vainly striven to bring about on occasion of the first union with the home Connexion in 1833 was realized spontaneously twenty-one years later. Slowly there had come about a change of attitude and temper in the Methodism of the two regions, effected partly through increased intercourse and the growth of national unity in the two colonies so different in their origin, but due also to a deepened spiritual life bringing with it a larger outlook and a more tolerant spirit. The Church was outgrowing political animosities.

A notable person came to the front at the Conference of 1853, in the person of Wellington Jeffers (later Doctor of Divinity), who was elected Secretary in succession to George R. Sander-son. Like so many other colonial leaders, Jeffers was Irish by birth ; but he was reared, and was converted to God, under Canadian Methodist influences. He grew out of the diffidence of his early ministry into assured power ; ' his modesty, diligence, kind familiarity amongst the people, and unmistakable ability,' earned for him wide popularity, and his business tact and unobtrusive readiness to serve won golden opinions amongst his brethren. Without overmastering talents, Dr. Jeffers ranked for many years with the most effective and variously useful Canadian Ministers. Succeeding to James Spencer in the editorship of the *Guardian*, he filled this post for nine years, ' wielding the editorial pen with singular ability.' Foremost amongst Canadian men of eloquence at this period was Lachlin Taylor—a Scotsman, as his name indicates, and a man of commanding presence—whose speeches on the missionary platform were compared to those of the English Richard Watson or Robert Newton. Dr. Lachlin Taylor ran a course parallel to that of his contemporary Jeffers. In 1852 he was made Secretary for Upper Canada of the Bible Society, and served this cause very effectively throughout the province for twelve years ; subsequently he became Missionary Secretary assisting Dr. Enoch Wood, under the Canada Conference. At the Conference of 1853 the

charge of the Mission to the Hudson Bay Territory was taken over from the British Missionary Society and amalgamated, much to its advantage, with the Indian work of Canadian Methodism. The tide of Connexional prosperity continued to flow in full stream; an increase of Church membership of upwards of 2,000 was reported, raising the total Church constituency for Upper Canada, in 1853, to the figure of 32,364. The Lower Canadian District recorded an increase of about 200, with a total number at this date close upon 4,000.

The Conference of 1854 met at Belleville early in June. Enoch Wood and John Ryerson continued in office as President and co-delegate respectively. Dr. Anson Green, whose strength had been impaired through excessive labours in middle life, now retired from active service. For many years he had held the influential post of Book-steward; he was, however, appointed representative of Canada to the approaching British Conference. A sign of the times appeared in the long debate which took place on a proposal to abolish the class-meeting test of Church membership; the change was stoutly opposed, under the leadership of Richard Jones, Wilkinson, Carroll, and Jeffers, and rejected by a very large majority of the Conference. An accession of 2,000 Church members was reported; 19 probationers were ordained, 24 candidates for the ministry admitted on probation; the Victoria College numbered 150 students; the income of the local Missionary Society had increased by 25 per cent.

The proposals for the annexation of the Canada East District were now ripe for acceptance; having been endorsed by the British Conference of last year,<sup>1</sup> they received the unanimous assent of this assembly. At once 'skilful financial minds were set to work to devise means by which the incoming brethren might be invested with equitable claims upon the funds of the Conference.' These and such other problems were carefully worked out. The District Meeting of Eastern Canada, held a little earlier, had taken corresponding measures to facilitate the anticipated union; in October following a

<sup>1</sup> The address of the British Conference of 1854 to the Canadian Conference speaks of 'the plan proposed by our Missionary Committee' for this purpose. While the overtures for union were made by the Eastern Canada District in 1853, it appears that the London Missionary Committee had not only assented to the proposal, but had taken up the matter on its own account and worked out 'a plan' for the purpose, which was forwarded to America. Doubtless the authorities of the British Canadian District had armed themselves with approval from home before raising the question, if they were not actually prompted from this quarter.



Joint Committee of the two bodies completed the necessary arrangements. To this Committee there were invited, by agreement on both sides, laymen chosen one from each Circuit Quarterly Meeting desiring to be represented. Fifty-two laymen appeared at the Committee in this character on its assembling, and many others subsequently arrived. Their presence and counsel were of the utmost service, since they secured the full concurrence of the Church with the measures that were being adopted, and supplied business experience and aid essential for carrying them into effect. An important step was taken by this action toward the proper recognition and employment of lay gifts in the chief assemblies of the Church. The whole financial administration of Canadian Methodism was overhauled at this meeting, and the relations of the uniting bodies were adjusted in such a way that the amalgamation came about without friction or discontent.

The formation of the Connexional 'Mixed Committee' above described, in view of the grave constitutional questions it took in hand, did not pass without criticism. The procedure was unprecedented; it was an attempt to apply upon new lines the principle laid down at the organization of Canadian Methodism in 1823, when it was prescribed that all regulations touching the temporal economy of the Church should be 'laid before the several Quarterly Conferences (Meetings) throughout the whole Connexion,' and should only become valid on 'receiving the consent . . . of two-thirds of the said Conference.' As the size of the Connexion grew, and its business increased in complication, this mode of reference to the judgement of the laity had become so cumbrous as to be unworkable, and the good sense of the people generally approved of the method adopted on this occasion to obtain the verdict of the Quarterly Meetings.<sup>1</sup> There were, however, some excellent men 'affected with *lay-phobia*' to whom this Committee was a portent; their alarm

was increased by the proceedings of a few of revolutionary tendency, before the meeting had properly settled to business. But the conduct of

<sup>1</sup> Occasion was taken to elicit from this gathering an opinion *in re* the Clergy Reserve Fund, the disposal of which was once more under debate in the Legislature. The Committee endorsed the Resolutions adopted by the Conference on this subject some years previously, adding a recommendation that 'the ministry of the Church' should decline the 'reception of any part of their avails (under the proposed distribution) for any denominational purpose.' The laity were resolutely opposed to every form and degree of State endowment.



the great majority very soon convinced them of the unfounded character of such apprehensions. This meeting confirmed our experience . . . that the great majority of the Wesleyan laity were law-abiding, quiet, and the very best aids to the executive in conserving rule and order, by keeping the fractious in their places. . . . It was shown that the experience of secular men may raise the character of deliberate proceedings in ecclesiastical assemblies.

So writes Carroll.<sup>1</sup>

Canada anticipated by twenty years the conclusion which British Methodism reached on the matter of lay representation. It is instructive to observe how questions of Church constitution have come early to a head upon the smaller and freer colonial arena, where men are readier for experiment, which mature more slowly in the larger life and the conservative atmosphere of home Methodism.<sup>2</sup> The findings of the mixed Committee in respect to the union of Eastern and Western Canadian Methodism were now, for the sake of safety and legality, laid *en bloc* before the Quarterly Meetings and formally approved. Nothing now remained but for the Conference of 1855 to actualize the union.

The Canadian Legislature had at length resolved upon winding up the business of the Clergy Reserve Fund, and plans for this object were maturing. Provision was to be made for discharging obligations which the State had already incurred as chargeable to the revenue accruing from this source; amongst those liabilities was the yearly grant (of £700) paid to the Wesleyan Missionary Society to assist its work in Upper Canada. However unfavourably this subsidy might be regarded by many Canadian Methodists, the Society in England was not disposed to surrender this prescriptive right. The grant, it was supposed, should be continued for twenty years at the existing rate, or should be commuted for a lump sum. The London Missionary Committee preferred to take an equitably fixed capital sum; the secularizing party in Canada opposed the commutation, with the intention of contesting the payment from year to year. The matter was

<sup>1</sup> *Case and his Contemporaries*, Vol. V., p. 223.

<sup>2</sup> This observation might be extended to the present date. The union of the Methodist Churches in the American, Australian, and South African colonies is prophetic of what is bound to come about in the old country. Even larger Church combinations are contemplated, both across the Atlantic and in the South Seas. Montreal and Melbourne are showing us the way to build up great theological teaching faculties by the inter-Church unions of Halls of Divinity.

in the hands of the Canadian authorities, and it was desirable that one of the Missionary Secretaries should visit Canada to guard the interests of the Society. Dr. John Beecham, now at the head of the Mission House staff,<sup>1</sup> and a man of great experience and tact in public matters, was accordingly dispatched with authority to negotiate a settlement. Ultimately the sum of £10,000 was obtained, on the principle of commutation, and was invested by the Missionary Society for the benefit of the Canadian Missions.

This visit had at the same time other and larger purposes. The coalescence of the District of Eastern Canada with the Conference of Western Canada promised to relieve the Missionary Society of a long-standing charge, the transference of which was an event sufficiently important to claim the presence of some chief officer of the Society. The approach of this alliance, moreover, in view of the rapidly growing strength of Canadian Methodism which it was bound to augment, suggested to men of enterprise on both sides of the Atlantic that the time had come for setting the Colonial Church upon its own feet, for establishing a self-governing 'Affiliated Conference' for the whole of Canada. Dr. Alder years before had mooted the idea of a Conference for British North America, embracing the whole Methodism of the colonies in this continent. A parallel plan had been evolved and was ripe for execution for unifying the Missionary Districts of the lower provinces under a 'Conference of Eastern British America.' The younger Australian Methodism had been stirred by the like honourable ambition, and measures for creating the Affiliated Conference of this great province were simultaneously approaching completion. The existence of the Conference of Upper Canada, now twenty-seven years old, and for fifteen years of that period in relations of partially dependent union with the British Conference, and the old-established connexion between the British and Irish Conferences, supplied precedents and starting-points for the peculiar kind of ecclesiastical combination, resembling that linking the self-governing

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Robert Alder, who had supervised missionary affairs in North America for many years, withdrew from the Mission House in 1851, and finally from the Wesleyan ministry in 1853. He took orders in the Church of England, and filled for some time an important pulpit in the city of London. Subsequently he became Archdeacon of Gibraltar, where he resided until the infirmities of age compelled his retirement. He remained to the last on friendly terms with his old colleagues and Methodist associates.

colonies of the British Empire to the United Kingdom which was embodied in the four Affiliated Conferences of Wesleyan Methodism created in the years 1852-55.

The colonial daughter Conferences owed their birth chiefly to the vigorous growth and the ripeness for autonomy of the Churches incorporated in them. The earlier projects of Robert Alder in this direction had failed to materialize because the colonial Methodists did not feel themselves competent as yet to bear their own burdens, and because the means of communication, now greatly improved, were in former days so defective as to render united action, directed from any local centre, extremely difficult. But the troubles through which British Methodism had recently passed, and the straits to which the Missionary Society was reduced at home, gave urgency to the desire for this change on the British side and accelerated the process of emancipation. For it meant relief to an impoverished exchequer and an overburdened administration. The colonies were not, however, thrown abruptly on their own resources; it was agreed that the new Canadian Conference should receive from the Missionary Society to aid its Missionary work an annual grant diminishing yearly.

The idea of an independent Methodism for British North America was introduced by Robert Alder, but John Beecham was the executant. He showed in the conduct of this complicated and critical business a fine statesmanship, uniting with his judicial temper, his industry and mastery of detail, and his diplomatic skill, the expertness of a Methodist jurist to whom every point of the Church's constitution and economy was familiar. This blend of qualities singularly fitted him to be the instrument in carrying out the long-cherished colonial policy of the Mission House. He sailed for America in the spring of 1855, under instructions from the Missionary Committee, landing in Halifax (N.S.) on May 24. His doings in the eastern provinces have been related in Chapter V. After spending a week or so there, he constituted their new Conference. He travelled westward to meet the Canadian Conference, due to assemble at London (Ont.) on June 6. He was received with every mark of respect, which his bearing and his public addresses deepened into reverence.

Enoch Wood again occupied the Conference chair and contributed all his authority and sagacity to the settlement



now reached. John Ryerson, the co-delegate and Vice-President, was absent in the north, on his visit to the Hudson Bay Mission now in course of re-establishment ; representing as he did ' the old Canadian graft-stalk,' this veteran chief heartily concurred in the proceedings. Matthew Richey attended Dr. Beecham on his journey from Halifax. No other man was so thoroughly acquainted with the whole field of Methodism, and its course of development, in British North America as was this eminent Preacher. Entering the ministry in the very year (1820) of the separation between Eastern and Western Canada, he had ' travelled ' in each of the provinces except Newfoundland, and during most of his thirty-five years of service had held important office. He was almost equally familiar with, and beloved in, Halifax, St. John (N.B.), Montreal, Kingston, and Toronto. He supplied a link between the days of William Black and those of Egerton Ryerson and Humphrey Pickard, and was intimate with the chief men of all the Districts concerned in the movement for amalgamation. He came joyfully to assist in the reunion of the severed Canadas, to bid God-speed to the enlarged Canadian Conference setting out upon its new course, and to carry back to the maritime provinces encouragement and counsel for their own venture upon the responsibilities of Conference life. Next to Dr. Beecham, Dr. Richey and Dr. Enoch Wood rendered the most important service in bringing about the successful foundation of the two Affiliated Conferences. The newly appointed Secretary of the Canadian Conference, Samuel Dwight Rice, had an experience almost as wide and varied as that of the two men just named, and a share in the founding of the new order only less than theirs. By the time of the meeting of June, 1855, after a gestation of two years, the plans for the reunion of East and West Canada in a single Conference had been elaborated and discussed from every point of view, so that nothing remained now but to confirm them by a final unanimous vote, and to admit the eastern brethren to the Conference now in session.

In Upper Canada, the six Districts of 1847 had grown to thirteen ; their names (ranging generally from west to east) were as follows : Toronto, Hamilton, Brantford, London, Chatham, Guelph, Owen Sound, Barrie, Cobourg, Belleville, Kingston, Brockville, Bytown (Ottawa). The single District



of Eastern Canada was divided into the three of Montreal, Quebec, and Stanstead. Last of all came the newly created Mission District of 'Hudson Bay and the Rocky Mountains,' with the veteran Thomas Hurlburt for its Chairman. Amongst the other Chairmen appear the familiar names of John and William Ryerson, Richard Jones, Samuel Rose, James Musgrove, Conrad Vandusen, Asahel Hurlburt; and in Lower Canada, John Carroll and Benjamin Slight. The Districts were small in their constituency, containing an average of 2,000 members apiece; but most of them covered large areas, and the difficulties of communication made it desirable to increase rather than diminish their number. The combined Church membership for Canada stood at the figure of 39,015, of whom 1,068 were Native Indians. As many as 31 candidates were accepted for the ministry at this Conference, two of these being men who sought transference from another Methodist Church. The total number of Ministers enrolled in the enlarged Canadian Conference was 335, serving in above 200 Circuits. In forming its new plans, this Conference decided to extend the term of Circuit itinerancy from three to five years. There was no 'Deed Poll' to limit the liberty of the colonial Church in suiting its methods to the altered times.

The most affecting scene of this historic assembly was afforded by the appearance of the venerable William Case as Preacher before the Conference, in celebration of the union, and at the same time of the jubilee of his own ministry in the colonies. Henry Ryan, his companion of 1805, had long since passed away; Andrew Prindle, his contemporary in the early struggles and hardships, had died a few months earlier at the age of seventy-five. Case remained, a monument of the first days of Canadian Methodism. He stood before a vast assembly, with snowy hair and sunny countenance, his step still elastic, his tall form unbent and alert, and his musical voice unimpaired. Preaching from the lovely words, 'But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting unto everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children,' he reviewed the sixty-four years' history of the Church in Canada, tracing the good hand of God who had led on and built up His people in this new and far-stretching land, turning hindrances into stepping-stones and privations into blessings, and bringing final enrichment out of calamity. The venerable man spoke

with his old simplicity and tender unction, and with an impressiveness and fullness of memory that only such weight of years and length of strenuous service could impart. This deliverance put the seal on the doings of an epoch-making Conference.

William Case's Jubilee sermon proved to be the old Preacher's *Nunc dimittis*. A few months later he suffered an accident in mounting his horse at his own house-door, which led to his death after a few weeks of illness. He breathed his last, in great peace, on October 19, 1855, having just completed the seventy-fifth year of his age. With Case's departure the early Missionary stage of Canadian Methodism comes to an end. The second sixty years of the history of this great national Church has been in keeping with the character and promise of the first. Its Domestic and Indian Missions have been vigorously maintained and extended, and have proved steadily fruitful. It has kept pace with the advance of colonization and made full use of the new facilities for locomotion. No colonial Church has watched more vigilantly the movements of immigration or attended more carefully to the spiritual needs of new-comers. In 1859 an expedition was sent out, headed by Dr. Ephraim Evans, to occupy the British settlements then beginning on the Pacific coast, and Methodism stretched its line from ocean to ocean across the continent.

The amalgamation of 1855 has been followed by other steps of a like nature, resulting in the establishment of a single powerful Methodism coterminous with the Dominion of Canada, numbering a Church membership not far short of 400,000 and a total constituency exceeding a million. In 1875 union was effected with the Wesleyan Conference of Eastern British America, and simultaneously with the Methodist New Connexion. The confederation was completed in 1884 by the accession of three smaller members of the Methodist family which had maintained up to this time a separate existence, viz. the Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada, the Primitive Methodist, and the Bible Christian Churches. The two last-named bodies, like the New Connexion, were offshoots of the Churches bearing the same titles in the mother country. In 1872 the Canadian Mission to Japan was commenced, which has contributed effectively to the evangelization of that wonderful country. The Churches raised up by this agency have united with those sprung from the Missions of the Methodist Episcopal

Church of America, to form the self-governing Methodist Church of Japan, which numbers at the present time 232 Ministers and nearly 14,000 Church members. This distant scion the British Missionary Society may fairly claim as her *grand-daughter*.

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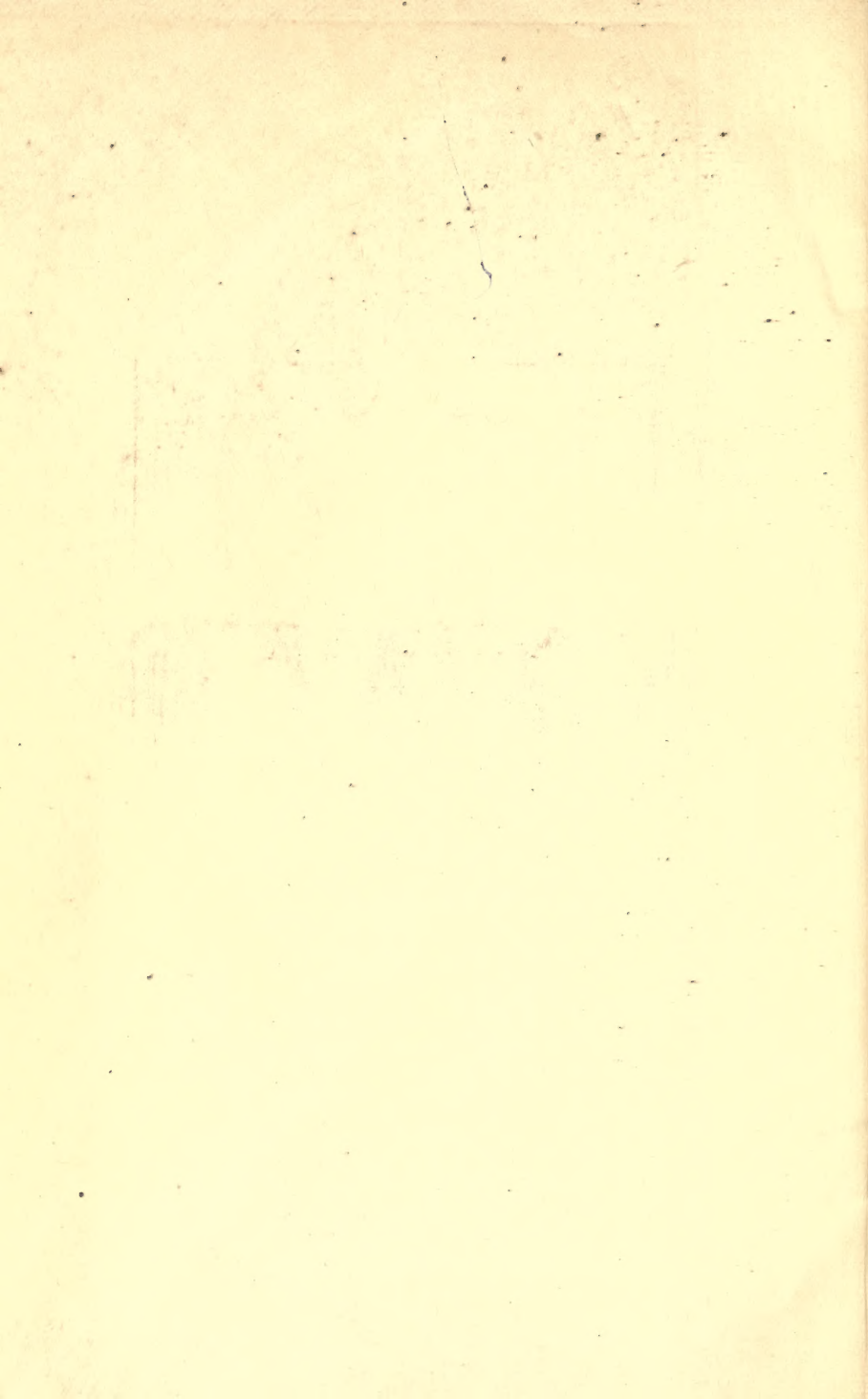
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